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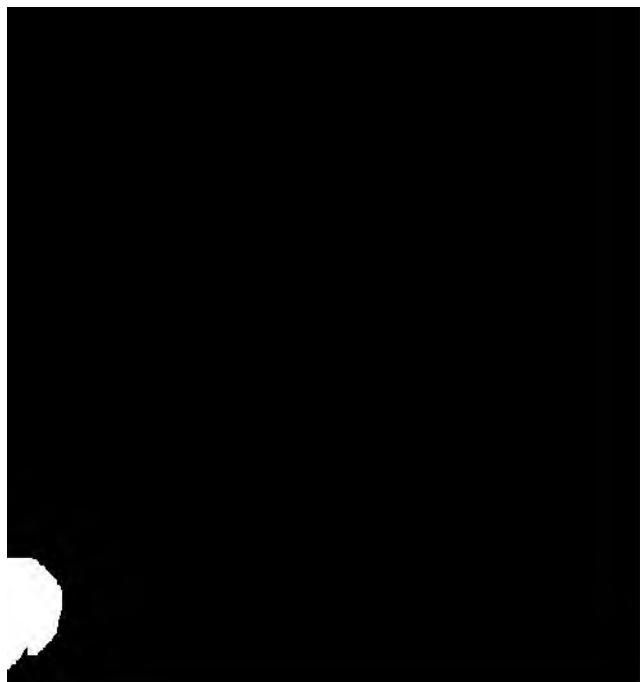








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THE POETICAL WORKS

OF  
JOHN KEATS

EDITED BY THE MESSRS. J. & A. CO. NEW YORK  
AND LONDON. 1850.

IN THREE VOLUMES AND ONE SUPPLEMENT.

BY BOSTON JOURNAL

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PUBLISHERS







# THE POETICAL WORKS

OF

# JOHN KEATS

GIVEN FROM HIS OWN EDITIONS AND OTHER AUTHENTIC SOURCES  
AND COLLATED WITH MANY MANUSCRIPTS

EDITED WITH NOTES AND APPENDICES

BY H. BUXTON FORMAN

*COMPLETE EDITION*

NEW YORK  
THOMAS Y. CROWELL & CO.  
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## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

**J**OHN KEATS was born October 31, 1795, at the stable designated by the sign of the Swan-and-Hoop, Finsbury Pavement, Moorfields, opposite what is now Finsbury Circus and the London Institution.

His father, Thomas Keats, came to London from Devon or Land's End in Cornwall. He was a young man of small stature, with brown hair and hazel eyes, giving an impression of liveliness and energy. He was remarkable for his common sense and natural instincts of refinement. He became head hostler for John Jennings, a man of some means and of unusual generosity, and married his daughter Frances, who is described as "tall, of good figure, with large oval face, and sensible deportment." It is the tradition that she was lively, impulsive, unusually talented, and inordinately fond of amusements. Indeed, the premature birth of her eldest son is commonly ascribed to her imprudent indulgences.

The other children were :

George, February 28, 1797; he came to America and died in 1841.

Tom, November 18, 1799; he died December, 1818.

Edward, who died in infancy, in 1801.

Frances Mary, June 3, 1803, who married Señor Llanos and was still living in Spain in 1889.

Keats's father was killed by a fall from his horse in the spring of 1804. Less than a year later his mother married William Rawlings, a stable-keeper. But the second marriage proved unhappy. Mrs. Rawlings went to live at Edmonton with her mother, who had also just been left a widow. John Jennings's fortune was about £13,160, and might have been more had he not been according to George Keats "extremely generous and gullible."

Even before these changes the boys had been sent to the private school of the Rev. John Clarke at Enfield. Their education was still continued there. When the school-house was removed years afterwards to make room for a railway station, the façade, decorated with "garlands of flowers and pomegranates, together with heads of cherubim," was purchased for the South Kensington Museum, as a characteristic example of early Georgian architecture. The school-room was forty feet long; there was a spacious playground, a garden beyond the court-yard, a sweep of lawn with a pond, and a two-acre field. John Keats at first showed no exceptional talent, but was distinguished principally for his pugnacious disposition. His quick temper was continually involving him in quarrels. He often fought fiercely even with his favorite brother George, who says in his recollections :

## BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH.

"From the time we were boys at school, where we loved, jangled, and fought alternately until we were separated in 1818, I in a great measure relieved him, by continual sympathy, explanation, and inexhaustible spirits and good humor, from many a bitter fit of hypochondriasm. He avoided teasing any one with his miseries but Tom and myself, and often asked our forgiveness; venting and discussing them gave him relief."

One of Keats's schoolmates, Edward Holmes, remembered that Keats "would fight any one, morning, noon, and night." He chose his friends according to their successful pugnacity. A maternal uncle remarkable for his stature and distinguished for his gallantry at the famous naval battle off Camperdown seems to have been his ideal. Yet his "vivacity, generosity, bravery, and extraordinary beauty of person and expression" rendered him a favorite in the school. Charles Cowden Clarke, the son of the schoolmaster, tells how on one occasion an usher boxed his brother Tom's ears. John in ungovernable rage rushed up and actually struck the usher. Clarke adds: "He was not merely the favorite of all, like a pet prize-fighter, for his terrier courage; but his highmindedness, his utter unconsciousness of a mean motive, his placability, his generosity, wrought so general a feeling in his behalf that I never heard a word of disapproval from any one, superior or equal, who had known him."

Of his home life almost nothing is known. On page 408 of the present volume there is a bit of doggerel verse which is said to be autobiographic. It simply means he was fond of pets. Toward the end of his school course Keats suddenly developed a great passion for reading. He pored over Lemprière's "Classical Dictionary," Tooke's "Pantheon," and Tindal's school abridgment of Spence's "Polymetis." He devoured all the books of history, travel, and

known as the author of "Orion") threw a snowball at him. The other boys expected a lively skirmish, but Horne took to his heels and got off "scot free"!

This is the only picture of him in that capacity, says Sidney Colvin, who quotes the anecdote on the authority of Edmund Gosse.

But during his brief apprenticeship, uneventful as it seemed, there was one door opened in his life which probably conditioned its fame. He was in the habit of walking over to Enfield once a week to read and talk with Cowden Clarke. Some time early in 1812 Clarke let him take a copy of Spenser's "Faërie Queene," and he says: "He romped through the scenes of the romance, like a young horse turned into a spring meadow." When any felicitous adjective or phrase attracted his attention "he would hoist himself up and look burly and dominant," saying (for instance), "What an image that is—sea-shouldering whales." How many dormant wings of genius has not Spenser, "the poet's poet," quickened to soar! Charles Brown, Keats's most intimate friend, says:

"In Spenser's fairy land he was enchanted, breathed in a new world, and became another being; till, enamoured of the stanza, he attempted to imitate it, and succeeded. This account of the sudden development of his poetic powers I first received from his brothers, and afterwards from himself." On page 26 will be found these stanzas, which if not especially Spenserian in style are certainly interesting from a biographical point of view. Sonnets and other forms of verse followed, but he showed them to no one for several years, not until the spring of 1815, when he timidly made his friend Clarke his confidant.

Meantime, he was beginning to find surgery and his secret worship of the Muses incompatible. Sometime in 1814, more than a year before the expiration of his apprenticeship, he quitted Mr. Hammond, who allowed the indentures to be cancelled. No one knows either the exact time or the cause, and the proof of any quarrel rests upon an enigmatical phrase of a letter, the correctness of which is in dispute. Keats himself denied that he abandoned surgery in favor of poetry.

He did not immediately abandon it. He continued his studies at St. Thomas's Hospital, and in July, 1815, passed his examination at Apothecaries' Hall, and the following March was appointed a "dresser" at Guy's Hospital.

He often scribbled doggerel verses in his fellow-students' note-books, but in his own he seems to have confined himself to taking full notes. Mr. Colvin remarks, as the "only signs of a wandering mind," quite "prettily touched" sketches of pansies and other flowers, decorating the margins of one manuscript note-book. The real reason for abandoning the practice of surgery seems to have been his lack of confidence in himself. When Cowden Clarke once asked him about his studies at the hospital, he replied: "The other day, for instance, during the lecture, there came a sunbeam into the room, and with it a whole troop of creatures floating in the ray, and I was off with them to Oberon and fairy land."

His last operation was the opening of a man's temporal artery. He told Brown that he did it "with the utmost nicety," but his dexterity seemed a miracle and he never dared lift the scalpel again.

Cowden Clarke about the beginning of 1816 settled in London, and the first book which the two friends attacked together was Chapman's "Homer." Keats's first great sonnet was struck off at a heat. Clarke found it at the breakfast table after they had spent a long evening over the translation.

Through Clarke, Keats was introduced to Leigh Hunt, who, by his fascination of person and manner, exercised an influence over far greater men than himself—an influence disproportionate to his genius and certainly in many respects harmful. Not a little of the weakness of Keats's earlier efforts may be traced to this conscious or unconscious imitation of Hunt's mannerisms. Moreover, Hunt was posing as a martyr of liberalism, and the Tory hatred which he so airily courted was not slow to strike also at his friends. The venom characterizing the savage criticisms which condemned Keats's published works was distilled from political fangs.

Keats and Hunt were congenial spirits, especially in their tastes for books, nature, and Greek antiquity. "The Lov'd Libertas" was Keats's poetic name for Hunt. They spent much time together in the "Vale of Health" where Hunt's cottage was situated; there are hints of the friendship in many poems exchanged. Once Keats presented Hunt with a crown of ivy; and was in turn rewarded with a round of sonnets. Occasionally they would challenge each other to rivalry on some chosen theme, as, for instance: sonnets on the grasshopper and cricket. Cowden Clarke spoke with warmth of Hunt's "unaffected generosity and perfectly unpretentious encouragement."

Among Keats's other intimate acquaintances were John Hamilton Reynolds, a now forgotten poet whose sister Jane married Tom Hood, Benjamin R. Haydon the artist, who painted Keats's head into his picture of Christ's entry

saw his first volume of poems given to the world. Literature was now his profession. He is described as being at this time "a small, handsome, ardent-looking youth; the stature little over five feet; the figure compact and well-turned, with the neck thrust eagerly forward, carrying a strong and shapely head set off by thickly clustering gold-brown hair; the features powerful, finished, and mobile; the mouth rich and wide, with an expression at once combative and sensitive in the extreme; the forehead not high, but broad and strong; the eyebrows nobly arched, and eyes hazel-brown, liquid-flashing, visibly inspired." Haydon said his eye had "an inward look perfectly divine, like a Delphian priestess who saw visions." Leigh Hunt also spoke of his "mellow and glowing, large, dark, and sensitive" eyes. Impressionable, easily affected to laughter or tears, full of fun, moody, dramatic, thoroughly lovable, Keats now faced the world.

It is interesting to note that the modern worshippers of Keats treasure with peculiar tenderness his very faults, his words quaintly misspelled, his grammatical errors, his exuberant immaturities of form and idea, his crude unconventionalities. Like Spenser he is the poet's poet: from his faults there is more to learn than from more perfect works.

The little book failed to make any impression except on a few choice spirits. The publishers felt that they had been imposed upon and wrote indignantly to George Keats: "We regret that your brother ever requested us to publish his book, or that our opinion of its talent should have led us to acquiesce in undertaking it."

Keats himself went into a temporary exile so as to concentrate his mind on some new work. He went to Caribrooke on the Isle of Wight, where he wrote his fine sonnet to the sea; then finding the solitude too trying, though his brother Tom was with him, he went to Margate, where he began "Endymion." From there he wrote to Haydon speaking among other things of his "horrid Morbidity of Temperament," which he said was the greatest enemy and stumbling-block that he had to fear.

He was probably somewhat worried about money matters. His guardian had mismanaged his funds; the supplies were running short. But Taylor & Hersey, afterwards the publishers of the *London Magazine*, had agreed to bring out "Endymion," and they advanced him a small sum, but sufficient to keep him in comfort while he was at work at it.

The work was continued briskly through the summer, first at Canterbury, then at Hampstead Heath, where he lodged with his two brothers and found congenial friendship with Charles W. Dilke and Charles Armitage Brown, as well as with Haydon, Clarke, Severn, and Hunt. Shelley invited him to stay with him at Great Marlow, but Keats declined. Later in the summer he went to visit Benjamin Bailey, then a student, but afterwards Archdeacon in Ceylon. At Oxford, where he wrote the third book of "Endymion," Keats, by a foolish indiscretion, laid the seeds of ill-health, which, together with inherited consumptive tendencies, made the poet himself recognize that he should never again be "secure in robustness."

While he was living at Hampstead he once found "a butcher" or "a butcher boy," or, as George Keats says, "a scoundrel in livery," ill-treating a cat, and engaged the fellow in a stand-up fight that lasted an hour. Keats succeeded in spite of his diminutive stature in administering a sound punishment.

It is said that Coleridge met Keats in a lane near Highgate and described him as "a loose, slack, not well-dressed youth." After shaking hands with him he said to Hunt, who was with him, "There is death in that hand." The accuracy of observation regarding Keats's shrunken old-looking hand does not seem to be compatible with the observation regarding his person, which was certainly not loose, but compact.

The first draught of "Endymion" was finished at Burford Bridge, near Dorking, on the 28th of November. He spent the first part of the winter in revising and correcting the proofs of "Endymion." During the holidays of that year (1817-1818), he acted as theatrical critic for the *Champion* in place of Reynolds, who was away. His admiration of Kean was unbounded; he said, "There is an indescribable *gusto* in his voice, by which we feel that the utterer is thinking of the past and future while speaking of the instant."

He was enjoying a wider circle of acquaintance. Three days after Christmas he was present at an "immortal dinner" given by Haydon. Present were Wordsworth quoting Milton and Vergil "with fine intonation," Charles Lamb, Monkhouse, Richie the African traveller. Lamb got tipsy and played all sorts of absurd practical jokes. Wordsworth invited Keats to dinner and is said to have called the Hymn to Pan (from "Endymion"), which Keats recited to him, "a pretty piece of paganism." It must have been his manner

becomes gradually darkened, and at the same time, on all sides of it, many doors are set open — but all dark — all leading to dark passages. We see not the balance of good and evil. We are in a mist; we are in that state, we feel 'the burden of the Mystery.'

In April "Endymion" was published with its modest criticism-disarming preface. He recognized its faults. "It is as good as I had power to make it by myself." It is to poetry what the earlier symphonies of Schubert are to music, and the splendid fragment of "Hyperion" in the same way may be compared to Schubert's "unfinished symphony."

In May Keats and his friend Brown (see page 435) started for Liverpool with George and his young bride, "the nymph of the downward smile and sidelong glance." After the farewells, the two friends went on a walking excursion through the Lake region and the north country. At Rydal they were disappointed to miss seeing Wordsworth. By stages of twenty miles and more each day they reached Scotland, where, as Keats wrote, "the clouds, the sky, the houses, all seem anti-Grecian and anti-Charlemagnish." To him scenery was fine, but human nature was finer. The poems written during the Scottish tour reflect his moods. He complained that "the mahogany-faced old jackass" who had charge of the Burns cottage spoiled his sublimity; "the flat dog," he said, "made me write a flat sonnet."

His health was not very good, and while, at first, he boasted of sleeping so soundly from his fatigue that one might sew his nose to his great toe and trundle him round the town like a hoop without waking him, afterwards he complains of coarse fare and accommodations, rough way and frequent drenchings. In the letter which contained his transcript of his fine Fingal poem he speaks of "a slight sore throat." The ascent of Ben Nevis was too much for him. It brought on feverish symptoms. The doctor whom he consulted forbade him to continue his tour. He took sail from Cromarty for London, and landed on the 18th of August. Mrs. Dilke received him. She wrote:

"John Keats arrived here last night, as brown and shabby as you can imagine; scarcely any shoes left, his jacket all torn at the back, a fur cap, a great plaid, and his knapsack. I cannot tell what he looked like!"

Troubles were waiting for him. The August *Blackwood* contained the famous or infamous attack on "Endymion." The personalities in it were inspired by Lockhart; whether he or Scott wrote the article is a matter of opinion. In September the *Quarterly* contained Gifford's equally contemptible and contemptuous attack on the volume. It was long supposed that Keats's life was sacrificed or at least shortened by these malicious attacks. It is now known that he had more strength of mental fibre than "to be snuffed out by an article."

He wrote in reference to the warm defence of his friends: "Praise or blame has but a momentary effect on the man whose love of beauty in the abstract makes him a severe critic on his own works. My own domestic criticism has given me pain without comparison beyond what *Blackwood* or the *Quarterly* could possibly inflict: and also, when I feel I am right, no



external praise can give me such a glow as my own solitary re-perception and ratification of what is fine."

An unknown admirer sent him £25 and a sonnet of sympathy. Miss Jane Porter, author of "The Scottish Chiefs," wrote him a letter of gushy encouragement and praise. Keats himself said: "The attempt to crush me by the *Quarterly* has only brought me more into notice."

A letter summoning Keats home had missed him in Scotland. His brother Tom was rapidly growing worse. He spent the autumn months in their lodgings at Hampstead taking care of the invalid. In December he died and Keats took up his residence with Brown, sharing the household expense and occupying the front sitting-room in a little house which Brown had built.

Before Tom Keats died "Hyperion" was begun, and as time wore on he became more and more absorbed in poetry, which, however, was shared with a new and growing passion. He had written in September, "I never was in love, yet the voice and shape of a woman has haunted me these two days."

He had written to his "brother and sister George" — "The roaring of the wind is my wife; and the stars through my window-panes are my children; the mighty abstract idea of Beauty in all things I have, stifles the more divided and minute domestic happiness. An amiable wife and sweet children I contemplate as part of that Beauty, but I must have a thousand of those beautiful particles to fill up my heart. I feel more and more every day, as my imagination strengthens, that I do not live in this world alone, but in a thousand worlds. No sooner am I alone, than shapes of epic greatness are stationed around me, and serve my spirit the office which is equivalent to a King's Body-guard. . . . These things combined with the opinion I have formed of the

though a little painful; her mouth is bad, and good; her profile is better than her full face, which indeed is not full, but pale and thin without showing any bones; her shape is very graceful, and so are her movements; her arms are good, her hands bad-ish, her feet tolerable."

At first he took a downright dislike to her, called her ignorant, monstrous in her behavior.

Within a week of their first meeting he declared himself her vassal. By April he was her lover; probably in July they became engaged. His friends — the few that were in the secret — did not approve. Dilke wrote: "God help him. It is a bad thing for them."

In order to have a secure future, since it had become evident to him that the adverse reviews had made literature much more difficult to him, he thought seriously of going to Edinburgh and studying medicine again. He wrote: "I am afraid I should not take kindly to it; I am sure I could not take fees; and yet I should like to do so; it is not worse than writing poems, and hanging them up to be flyblown on the Review shambles." His finances were in a desperate condition. He had recklessly lent various friends sums amounting to upwards of two hundred pounds, and his guardian made it humiliating for him to obtain what he had a right to expect. Strangely enough a sum considerably over a thousand pounds was really at his disposal, but no one seemed to know anything about it until two years after his death.

Meantime he was writing some of his best immortal verse; many short poems, all but one of his six splendid odes. I need not go into the history of the poems; each has its own biography.

In October, 1819, he went up to London hoping to find profitable literary work on the press. But it was of no use. In ten days he was back at Hampstead, again under the spell of the Circe whose love was like a poison to him.

There is only one more act to the tragedy of his life.

His drama "Otho," from which he had high expectations, was accepted by Kean, but at the prospect of a year's delay in its production; he and Brown withdrew it and offered it to Macready, who returned it unopened. His ambition was "to make as great a revolution in modern dramatic writing as Kean has done in acting." That ambition was doomed to disappointment.

His friend Brown, who did not know of his engagement, perceived that he was unhappy. He also discovered by accident that he was secretly taking opium at times to keep up his spirits.

In January, 1820, George Keats, who had failed in business in Louisville, Ky., owing as he alleged to the dishonesty of Audubon the naturalist, made a flying visit to England to raise some more money. He went back carrying with him several hundred pounds that belonged to his brother, never suspecting that he was living even then on the generosity of his friend Brown. It was not till some time afterwards that he succeeded in clearing himself from the charge of having been mean and cruel to his brother.

A few days after George Keats's departure occurred the pathetic incident which Brown relates so dramatically:

"On Thursday, Feb. 3, 1820, he came into the house in a state that looked like fierce intoxication. Such a state in him, I knew, was impossible; it was therefore the more fearful. I asked hurriedly: 'What is the matter? You are fevered?' 'Yes, yes,' he answered, 'I was on the outside of the stage this bitter day, till I was severely chilled,—but now I don't feel it. Fevered!—of course, a little.' He mildly and instantly yielded—a property in his nature towards any friend—to my request that he should go to bed. I followed, with the best immediate remedy in my power. I entered his chamber as he leapt into bed. On entering the cold sheets, before his head was on the pillow, he slightly coughed, and I heard him say, 'That is blood from my mouth.' I went towards him; he was examining a single drop of blood upon the sheet. 'Bring me the candle, Brown, and let me see this blood.' After regarding it steadfastly, he looked up in my face, with a calmness of countenance that I can never forget, and said, 'I cannot be deceived in that color; that drop of blood is my death-warrant; I must die.' I ran for a surgeon. My friend was bled, and at five in the morning I left him, after he had been some time in a quiet sleep."

He gradually rallied, and by the first of April was able to take a five-mile walk, and the doctor assured him that his only malady was "nervous irritability and general weakness, caused by anxiety, and by the excitement of poetry."

He wrote Miss Brawne, offering to release her from the engagement, but she refused. Even before this he had been thinking of sailing to the tropics as ship's surgeon. In May Brown started for Scotland for another walking

in Italy. Keats decided to go with him, and they embarked on board the "Maria Crowther" for Naples, September 18. The expenses of his journey were paid by an advance of £100 on the copyright of "Endymion."

Brown had heard of Keats's relapse, and hastened home to see him. He reached the Thames on a Dundee smack, and the two friends lay within hail of each other off Gravesend, unawares. While the "Maria Crowther" was detained by stormy weather in the channel and at Portsmouth, Keats landed and visited friends at Bedhampton. Brown was then at Chichester, only ten miles away. They never met again, but Keats wrote Brown a long, pathetic letter, confiding to him the secret of the tortures which he had suffered, and asking him to be a friend to Miss Brawne after he was dead.

"The thought of leaving Miss Brawne is beyond everything horrible — the sense of darkness coming over me — I eternally see her figure eternally vanishing. Some of the phrases she was in the habit of using during my last nursing at Wentworth Place ring in my ears. Is there another life? Shall I awake and find this a dream? There must be — we cannot be created for this sort of suffering."

Contrary winds enabled Keats once more to land on English soil. It was on the Dorsetshire coast, and here he wrote his last poem, the sonnet beginning:

"Bright star, would I were stedfast as thou art."

In the Bay of Biscay the ship was met by a violent storm. Severn, finding the water swashing through their cabin in the night, called out to Keats, "half fearing he might be dead." Keats answered cheerily with a quotation from a famous sea-song.

After the storm abated he began to read the shipwreck scene in Byron's "Don Juan," but flung the volume down, indignant at the reckless cynicism which could "make solemn things gay and gay things solemn."

After a month's voyage the vessel reached Naples, when Keats drearily relieved the dulness of a ten days' quarantine by "summoning up in a kind of desperation more puns than in the whole course of his life before."

Shelley again wrote to Keats inviting him to Pisa; but he decided to go with Severn to Rome. He suffered during the drive from lack of proper food, but found delight in the scenery and especially the flowers. At Rome, where they arrived towards the end of November, they took lodgings at the Piazza di Spagna. Severn, who was a good musician, got a piano, and often soothed his friend's pain by playing to him. The weather was fine and for a time he seemed to improve; his spirits rose, and he was often pleasant and witty. He planned a poem on the subject of Sabrina. On the last day of November he himself wrote Brown a cheerful letter very different from that which he wrote on the first day of the month, when he said:

"I have coals of fire in my breast. It surprises me that the human heart is capable of so much misery."

But he could not summon resolution to write to Miss Brawne again. The

last letter that he is known to have sent her was dated July 20, — a most melancholy and terrible letter.

On the tenth of December he suffered a relapse. Hemorrhage followed hemorrhage. He besought Severn to let him have opium to end all, not from fear of pain, but so that he might spare his friend the trials which the illness caused.

Keats was not a believer. Severn was a Christian, and his influence over Keats was most beneficent. He asked Severn to read to him from Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying," and certainly strove to calm the tumult of his soul.

His habitual question of the doctor was: "When will this posthumous life of mine come to an end?" Neither the friend nor the doctor could bear the pathetic expression of his great eyes "burning with a sad and piercing unearthly brightness in his wasted cheeks." His appreciation of every act of kindness was very lovely, and Severn's reminiscences of his death-bed are exquisite pictures of pathos and unselfish friendship.

On the 23d of February, 1821, about four o'clock, the end came. He said: "Severn — I — lift me up — I am dying — I shall die easy; don't be frightened — be firm and thank God it has come."

When at last the breathing ceased, Severn thought he still slept.

Three days later he was buried in the Protestant cemetery near the Pyramid of Caius Sestus, and there sixty-two years later Severn's remains were also placed.

The fame of Keats has steadily grown since his death. His place is certain among the foremost of English poets. He is distinctively the bard of Beauty;

poems,

BY

JOHN KEATS.

---

"What more felicity can fall to creature,  
"Than to enjoy delight with liberty."

*Fate of the Butterfly.*—SPENSER

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LONDON:

PRINTED FOR

C. & J. OLLIER, 3, WELBECK STREET,  
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1817.

[Keats's first volume, published early in 1817, is a foolscap octavo worked in half sheets. It was issued in drab boards, with a back label *Keats's Poems*, and consists of a blank leaf, fly-title *Poems* in heavy black letter, with imprint on verso, "PRINTED BY C. RICHARDS, NO. 18, WARWICK STREET, GOLDEN SQUARE, LONDON," title-page as given opposite, Dedication with note on verso as reproduced, and pages 1 to 121 including the fly-titles to the Epistles, Sonnets, and *Sleep and Poetry*, all as reproduced in the following pages. There are head-lines in Roman capitals running throughout each section, recto and verso alike, (1) *Poems*, (2) *Epistles*, (3) *Sonnets*, and (4) *Sleep and Poetry*. Leigh Hunt, reviewing with characteristic boldness, loyalty, and insight this volume, dedicated to him, laid his finger unerringly on its weak and strong points. His review appeared in *The Examiner* for the 1st of June and 8th and 13th of July, 1817, and will be found reprinted as an Appendix in the present edition of *Keats's Works*: but I have not hesitated to snatch a line

## DEDICATION.

TO LEIGH HUNT, Esq.

GLORY and loveliness have pass'd away;  
For if we wander out in early morn,  
No wreathed incense do we see upborne  
Into the east, to meet the smiling day:  
No crowd of nymphs soft voic'd and young, and gay,  
In woven baskets bringing ears of corn,  
Roses, and pinks, and violets, to adorn  
The shrine of Flora in her early May.  
But there are left delights as high as these,  
And I shall ever bless my destiny,  
That in a time, when under pleasant trees  
Pan is no longer sought, I feel a free  
A leafy luxury, seeing I could please  
With these poor offerings, a man like thee.

---

Readers of Charles Cowden Clarke's *Recollections of Keats*, printed in the present edition, will remember the statement, still appropriate here, that, "on the evening when the last proof sheet [of the 1817 volume] was brought from the printer, it was accompanied by the information that if a 'dedication to the book was intended it must be sent forthwith.' Whereupon he withdrew to a side table, and in the buzz of a mixed conversation (for there were several friends in the room) he composed and brought to Charles Ollier, the publisher, the Dedication Sonnet to Leigh Hunt." The first of the three Sonnets to Keats in Hunt's *Foliage* forms a fitting reply to this; and the three will be found in the Appendix.



[THE Short Pieces in the middle of the Book, as well as some of the Sonnets, were written at an earlier period than the rest of the Poems.]

## POEMS.

"Places of nestling green for Poets made."  
STORY OF RIMINI.

I STOOD tip-toe upon a little hill,  
The air was cooling, and so very still,  
That the sweet buds which with a modest pride  
Pull droopingly, in slanting curve aside,  
Their scanty leav'd, and finely tapering stems, 5  
Had not yet lost those starry diadems  
Caught from the early sobbing of the morn.  
The clouds were pure and white as flocks new shorn,  
And fresh from the clear brook; sweetly they slept  
On the blue fields of heaven, and then there crept 10  
A little noiseless noise among the leaves,  
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves:  
For not the faintest motion could be seen  
Of all the shades that slanted o'er the green.  
There was wide wand'ring for the greediest eye, 15  
To peer about upon variety;  
Far round the horizon's crystal air to skim,  
And trace the dwindled edgings of its brim;  
To picture out the quaint, and curious bending  
Of a fresh woodland alley, never ending; 20  
Or by the bowery clefts, and leafy shelves,  
Guess where the jaunty streams refresh themselves.  
I gazed awhile, and felt as light, and free  
As though the fanning wings of Mercury

---

(1) Leigh Hunt tells us in *Lord Byron and Some of his Contemporaries* that "this poem was suggested to Keats by a delightful summer's-day, as he stood beside the gate that leads from the Battery on Hampstead Heath into a field by Caen Wood."

(12) Hunt calls this (see Appendix) "a fancy, founded, as all beautiful fancies are, on a strong sense of what really exists or occurs."

5  
*POEMS PUBLISHED IN 1817.*

Had play'd upon my heels: I was light-hearted, 25  
And many pleasures to my vision started;  
So I straightway began to pluck a posey  
Of luxuries bright, milky, soft and rosy.

A bush of May flowers with the bees about them;  
Ah, sure no tasteful nook would be without them; 30  
And let a lush laburnum oversweep them,  
And let long grass grow round the roots to keep them  
Moist, cool and green; and shade the violets,  
That they may bind the moss in leafy nets.

A filbert hedge with wild briar overwin'd, 35  
And clumps of woodbine taking the soft wind  
Upon their summer thrones; there too should be  
The frequent chequer of a youngling tree,  
That with a score of light green brethren shoots  
From the quaint mossiness of aged roots: 40  
Round which is heard a spring-head of clear waters  
Babbling so wildly of its lovely daughters  
The spreading blue bells: it may haply mourn  
That such fair clusters should be rudely torn  
From their fresh beds, and scatter'd thoughtlessly 45  
By infant hands, left on the path to die.



*"I STOOD TIP-TOE UPON A LITTLE HILL."* 7

And taper fingers catching at all things,  
To bind them all about with tiny rings. 60

Linger awhile upon some bending planks  
That lean against a streamlet's rushy banks,  
And watch intently Nature's gentle doings:  
They will be found softer than ring-dove's cooings.  
How silent comes the water round that bend; 65

Not the minutest whisper does it send  
To the o'erhanging shallows: blades of grass  
Slowly across the chequer'd shadows pass.  
Why, you might read two sonnets, ere they reach  
To where the hurrying freshnesses aye preach 70

A natural sermon o'er their pebbly beds;  
Where swarms of minnows show their little heads,  
Staying their wavy bodies 'gainst the streams,  
To taste the luxury of sunny beams  
Temper'd with coolness. How they ever wrestle 75

With their own sweet delight, and ever nestle  
Their silver bellies on the pebbly sand.  
If you but scantily hold out the hand,  
That very instant not one will remain;  
But turn your eye, and they are there again, 80

The ripples seem right glad to reach those cresses,  
And cool themselves among the em'rald tresses;  
The while they cool themselves, they freshness give,  
And moisture, that the bowery green may live:  
So keeping up an interchange of favours, 85

Like good men in the truth of their behaviours.  
Sometimes goldfinches one by one will drop  
From low hung branches; little space they stop;  
But sip, and twitter, and their feathers sleek;  
Then off at once, as in a wanton freak: 90

---

(61-80) Clarke says Keats told him this passage was the recollection of the friends' "having frequently loitered over the rail of a foot-bridge that spanned . . . a little brook in the last field upon entering Edmonton." Keats, he says, "thought the picture correct, and acknowledged to a partiality for it." Lord Houghton prints the following alternative reading of the passage beginning with line 61:—

"Linger awhile among some bending planks  
That lean against a streamlet's daisied banks,  
And watch intently Nature's gentle doings:  
That will be found as soft as ringdoves' cooings.  
The inward ear will hear her and be blest,  
And tingle with a joy too light for rest."

Or perhaps, to show their black, and golden wings,  
 Pausing upon their yellow flutterings.  
 Were I in such a place, I sure should pray  
 That nought less sweet, might call my thoughts away,  
 Than the soft rustle of a maiden's gown 95  
 Fanning away the dandelion's down ;  
 Than the light music of her nimble toes  
 Patting against the sorrel as she goes.  
 How she would start, and blush, thus to be caught  
 Playing in all her innocence of thought. 100  
 O let me lead her gently o'er the brook,  
 Watch her half-smiling lips, and downward look ;  
 O let me for one moment touch her wrist ;  
 Let me one moment to her breathing list ;  
 And as she leaves me may she often turn 105  
 Her fair eyes looking through her locks auburne.  
 What next ? A tuft of evening primroses,  
 O'er which the mind may hover till it dozes ;  
 O'er which it well might take a pleasant sleep,  
 But that 'tis ever startled by the leap 110  
 Of buds into ripe flowers ; or by the flitting  
 Of diverse moths, that aye their rest are quitting ;  
 Or by the moon lifting her silver rim  
 Above a cloud, and with a gradual swim  
 Coming into the blue with all her light. 115

But the fair paradise of Nature's light?  
 In the calm grandeur of a sober line,  
 We see the waving of the mountain pine;  
 And when a tale is beautifully staid,  
 We feel the safety of a hawthorn glade: 130  
 When it is moving on luxurious wings,  
 The soul is lost in pleasant smotherings:  
 Fair dewy roses brush against our faces,  
 And flowering laurels spring from diamond vases;  
 O'er head we see the jasmine and sweet briar, 135  
 And bloomy grapes laughing from green attire;  
 While at our feet, the voice of crystal bubbles  
 Charms us at once away from all our troubles:  
 So that we feel uplifted from the world,  
 Walking upon the white clouds wreath'd and curl'd. 140  
 So felt he, who first told, how Psyche went  
 On the smooth wind to realms of wonderment;  
 What Psyche felt, and Love, when their full lips  
 First touch'd; what amorous, and fondling nips  
 They gave each other's cheeks; with all their sighs, 145  
 And how they kist each other's tremulous eyes:  
 The silver lamp, — the ravishment, — the wonder —  
 The darkness, — loneliness, — the fearful thunder;  
 Their woes gone by, and both to heaven upflown,  
 To bow for gratitude before Jove's throne. 150  
 So did he feel, who pull'd the boughs aside,  
 That we might look into a forest wide,  
 To catch a glimpse of Fauns, and Dryades  
 Coming with softest rustle through the trees;  
 And garlands woven of flowers wild, and sweet, 155  
 Upheld on ivory wrists, or sporting feet:  
 Telling us how fair, trembling Syrinx fled  
 Arcadian Pan, with such a fearful dread.  
 Poor nymph, — poor Pan, — how he did weep to find,

(128) In the manuscript we read *a mountain Pine*.

(141) Compare *Endymion*, final couplet: —

Peona went

Home through the gloomy wood in wonderment.

(144) This was originally written in the manuscript, *What fondleing and amorous nips*; but the words are marked to be transposed.

(151) Cancelled manuscript reading, *So do they feel who pull*; and in the next line, *may* for *might*.

(153) In the manuscript, and in the original edition, *Fawns* for *Fauns*.

(155) Cancelled manuscript reading, *And curious garlands of flowers, &c.*

(156) The manuscript has *sportive* for *sporting*.

(159) In the manuscript, *how did he weep*.

Nought but a lovely sighing of the wind 160  
 Along the reedy stream ; a half heard strain,  
 Full of sweet desolation — balmy pain.

What first inspir'd a bard of old to sing  
 Narcissus pining o'er the untainted spring?  
 In some delicious ramble, he had found 165  
 A little space, with boughs all woven round ;  
 And in the midst of all, a clearer pool  
 Than e'er reflected in its pleasant cool,

The blue sky here, and there, serenely peeping  
 Through tendril wreaths fantastically creeping. 170

And on the bank a lonely flower he spied,  
 A meek and forlorn flower, with naught of pride,  
 Drooping its beauty o'er the watery clearness,  
 To woo its own sad image into nearness :  
 Deaf to light Zephyrus it would not move ; 175

But still would seem to droop, to pine, to love.  
 So while the poet stood in this sweet spot,  
 Some fainter gleamings o'er his fancy shot ;  
 Nor was it long ere he had told the tale  
 Of young Narcissus, and sad Echo's bale. 180

Where had he been, from whose warm head out-flew

"I STOOD TIP-TOE UPON A LITTLE HILL." 11

The incense went to her own starry dwelling.  
But though her face was clear as infant's eyes,  
Though she stood smiling o'er the sacrifice, 200  
The Poet wept at her so piteous fate,  
Wept that such beauty should be desolate :  
So in fine wrath some golden sounds he won,  
And gave meek Cynthia her Endymion.

Queen of the wide air ; thou most lovely queen 205  
Of all the brightness that mine eyes have seen !  
As thou exceedest all things in thy shine,  
So every tale, does this sweet tale of thine.  
O for three words of honey, that I might  
Tell but one wonder of thy bridal night ! 210

Where distant ships do seem to show their keels  
Phœbus awhile delay'd his mighty wheels,  
And turn'd to smile upon thy bashful eyes,  
Ere he his unseen pomp would solemnize.  
The evening weather was so bright, and clear, 215  
That men of health were of unusual cheer ;  
Stepping like Homer at the trumpet's call,  
Or young Apollo on the pedestal :  
And lovely women were as fair and warm,  
As Venus looking sideways in alarm. 220  
The breezes were ethereal, and pure,  
And crept through half closed lattices to cure  
The languid sick ; it cool'd their fever'd sleep,  
And sooth'd them into slumbers full and deep.  
Soon they awoke clear ey'd : nor burnt with thirsting, 225  
Nor with hot fingers, nor with temples bursting :  
And springing up, they met the wond'ring sight  
Of their dear friends, nigh foolish with delight ;  
Who feel their arms, and breasts, and kiss and stare,  
And on their placid foreheads part the hair. 230  
Young men, and maidens at each other gaz'd  
With hands held back, and motionless, amaz'd  
To see the brightness in each other's eyes ;  
And so they stood, fill'd with a sweet surprise,  
Until their tongues were loos'd in poesy. 235  
Therefore no lover did of anguish die :  
But the soft numbers, in that moment spoken,  
Made silken ties, that never may be broken.



Cynthia! I cannot tell the greater blisses,  
 That follow'd thine, and thy dear shepherd's kisses: 240  
 Was there a poet born? — but now no more,  
 My wand'ring spirit must no farther soar. —

## SPECIMEN OF AN INDUCTION TO A POEM.\*

LO! I must tell a tale of chivalry;  
 For large white plumes are dancing in mine eye.  
 Not like the formal crest of latter days:  
 But bending in a thousand graceful ways;  
 So graceful, that it seems no mortal hand, 5  
 Or e'en the touch of Archimago's wand,  
 Could charm them into such an attitude.  
 We must think rather, that in playful mood,  
 Some mountain breeze had turn'd its chief delight,  
 To show this wonder of its gentle might. 10  
 Lo! I must tell a tale of chivalry;  
 For while I muse, the lance points slantingly  
 Athwart the morning air: some lady sweet,  
 Who cannot feel for cold her tender feet,  
 From the worn top of some old battlement 15

SPECIMEN OF AN INDUCTION TO A POEM. 13

And from her own pure self no joy dissembling,  
 Wraps round her ample robe with happy trembling.  
 Sometimes, when the good Knight his rest would take,  
 It is reflected, clearly, in a lake, 20  
 With the young ashen boughs, 'gainst which it rests,  
 And th' half seen mossiness of linnets' nests,  
 Ah! shall I ever tell its cruelty,  
 When the fire flashes from a warrior's eye,  
 And his tremendous hand is grasping it, 25  
 And his dark brow for very wrath is knit?  
 Or when his spirit, with more calm intent,  
 Leaps to the honors of a tournament,  
 And makes the gazers round about the ring  
 Stare at the grandeur of the ballancing? 30  
 No, no! this is far off: — then how shall I  
 Revive the dying tones of minstrelsy,  
 Which linger yet about lone gothic arches,  
 In dark green ivy, and among wild larches?  
 How sing the splendour of the revelries, 35  
 When buts of wine are drunk off to the lees?  
 And that bright lance, against the fretted wall,  
 Beneath the shade of stately banneral,  
 Is slung with shining cuirass, sword, and shield?  
 Where ye may see a spur in bloody field. 40  
 Light-footed damsels move with gentle paces  
 Round the wide hall, and show their happy faces;  
 Or stand in courtly talk by fives and sevens:  
 Like those fair stars that twinkle in the heavens.  
 Yet must I tell a tale of chivalry: 45  
 Or wherefore comes that steed so proudly by?  
 Wherefore more proudly does the gentle knight,  
 Rein in the swelling of his ample might?

Spenser! thy brows are arched, open, kind,  
 And come like a clear sun-rise to my mind; 50  
 And always does my heart with pleasure dance,  
 When I think on thy noble countenance:  
 Where never yet was ought more earthly seen  
 Than the pure freshness of thy laurels green.

(44) The transcript reads *which* for *that*.

(46) In previous editions, *knight*; but in a copy of the 1817 volume bearing on the title-page an inscription in Keats's writing, the word *steed* is substituted in manuscript for *knight*. The transcript also reads *steed*.

Therefore, great bard, I not so fearfully  
Call on thy gentle spirit to hover nigh  
My daring steps: or if thy tender care,  
Thus startled unaware,  
Be jealous that the foot of other wight  
Should madly follow that bright path of light  
Trac'd by thy lov'd Libertas; he will speak,  
And tell thee that my prayer is very meek;  
That I will follow with due reverence,  
And start with awe at mine own strange pretence.  
Him thou wilt hear; so I will rest in hope  
To see wide plains, fair trees and lawny slope:  
The morn, the eve, the light, the shade, the flowers;  
Clear streams, smooth lakes, and overlooking towers.

## CALIDORE.

## A FRAGMENT.

YOUNG Calidore is paddling o'er the lake;



CALIDORE.

15

'Gainst the smooth surface, and to mark anon,  
The widening circles into nothing gone.

And now the sharp keel of his little boat  
Comes up with ripple, and with easy float, 20  
And glides into a bed of water lillies :  
Broad leav'd are they and their white canopies  
Are upward turn'd to catch the heavens' dew.  
Near to a little island's point they grew ;  
Whence Calidore might have the goodliest view 25  
Of this sweet spot of earth. The bowery shore  
Went off in gentle windings to the hoar  
And light blue mountains : but no breathing man  
With a warm heart, and eye prepar'd to scan  
Nature's clear beauty, could pass lightly by 30  
Objects that look'd out so invitingly  
On either side. These, gentle Calidore  
Greeted, as he had known them long before.

The sidelong view of swelling leafiness,  
Which the glad setting sun, in gold doth dress ; 35  
Whence ever, and anon the jay outsprings,  
And scales upon the beauty of its wings.

The lonely turret, shatter'd, and outworn,  
Stands venerably proud ; too proud to mourn  
Its long lost grandeur : fir trees grow around, 40  
Aye dropping their hard fruit upon the ground.

The little chapel with the cross above  
Upholding wreaths of ivy ; the white dove,  
That on the window spreads his feathers light,  
And seems from purple clouds to wing its flight. 45  
Green tufted islands casting their soft shades  
Across the lake ; sequester'd leafy glades,

---

(28) In the transcript, line 28 reads —

And light blue Mountains. But sure no breathing man  
and in line 29 *an* stands in place of *and*.

(40) In the transcript this and the next line stand thus : —

Its long lost grandeur. Laburnums grow around  
And bow their golden honors to the ground.

(42) In the transcript, *its cross*.

(44) The transcript reads *window* ; the first edition, *windows*.

That through the dimness of their twilight show  
 Large dock leaves, spiral foxgloves, or the glow  
 Of the wild cat's eyes, or the silvery stems 50  
 Of delicate birch trees, or long grass which hems  
 A little brook. The youth had long been viewing  
 These pleasant things, and heaven was bedewing  
 The mountain flowers, when his glad senses caught  
 A trumpet's silver voice. Ah! it was fraught 55  
 With many joys for him: the warder's ken  
 Had found white coursers prancing in the glen:  
 Friends very dear to him he soon will see;  
 So pushes off his boat most eagerly,  
 And soon upon the lake he skims along, 60  
 Deaf to the nightingale's first under-song;  
 Nor minds he the white swans that dream so sweetly:  
 His spirit flies before him so completely.

And now he turns a jutting point of land,  
 Whence may be seen the castle gloomy, and grand: 65  
 Nor will a bee buzz round two swelling peaches,  
 Before the point of his light shallop reaches  
 Those marble steps that through the water dip:  
 Now over them he goes with hasty trip,  
 And scarcely stays to ope the folding doors: 70

*CALIDORE.*

17

Made him delay to let their tender feet 85  
 Come to the earth ; with an incline so sweet  
 From their low palfreys o'er his neck they bent :  
 And whether there were tears of languishment,  
 Or that the evening dew had pearl'd their tresses,  
 He feels a moisture on his cheek, and blesses 90  
 With lips that tremble, and with glistening eye,  
 All the soft luxury  
 That nestled in his arms. A dimpled hand,  
 Fair as some wonder out of fairy land,  
 Hung from his shoulder like the drooping flowers 95  
 Of whitest Cassia, fresh from summer showers :  
 And this he fondled with his happy cheek  
 As if for joy he would no further seek ;  
 When the kind voice of good Sir Clerimond  
 Came to his ear, like something from beyond 100  
 His present being : so he gently drew  
 His warm arms, thrilling now with pulses new,  
 From their sweet thrall, and forward gently bending,  
 Thank'd heaven that his joy was never ending ;  
 While 'gainst his forehead he devoutly press'd 105  
 A hand heaven made to succour the distress'd ;  
 A hand that from the world's bleak promontory  
 Had lifted Calidore for deeds of Glory.

Amid the pages, and the torches' glare,  
 There stood a knight, patting the flowing hair 110  
 Of his proud horse's mane : he was withal  
 A man of elegance, and stature tall :  
 So that the waving of his plumes would be  
 High as the berries of a wild ash tree,  
 Or as the winged cap of Mercury. 115  
 His armour was so dexterously wrought  
 In shape, that sure no living man had thought  
 It hard, and heavy steel : but that indeed  
 It was some glorious form, some splendid weed,  
 In which a spirit new come from the skies 120  
 Might live, and show itself to human eyes.  
 'Tis the far-fam'd, the brave Sir Gondibert,  
 Said the good man to Calidore alert ;  
 While the young warrior with a step of grace

---

(85) The transcript reads *pretty feet*.  
 (101) *This present being*, in the transcript.  
 (103) The transcript reads *meekly bending*.

Came up, — a courtly smile upon his face, 125  
 And mailed hand held out, ready to greet  
 The large-ey'd wonder, and ambitious heat  
 Of the aspiring boy; who as he led  
 Those smiling ladies, often turn'd his head  
 To admire the visor arch'd so gracefully 130  
 Over a knightly brow; while they went by  
 The lamps that from the high-roof'd hall were pendent,  
 And gave the steel a shining quite transcendent.  
 Soon in a pleasant chamber they are seated;  
 The sweet-lipp'd ladies have already greeted 135  
 All the green leaves that round the window clamber,  
 To show their purple stars, and bells of amber,  
 Sir Gondibert has doff'd his shining steel,  
 Gladdening in the free, and airy feel  
 Of a light mantle; and while Clerimond 140  
 Is looking round about him with a fond,  
 And placid eye, young Calidore is burning  
 To hear of knightly deeds, and gallant spurning  
 Of all unworthiness; and how the strong of arm  
 Kept off dismay, and terror, and alarm 145  
 From lovely woman: while brimful of this,  
 He gave each damsel's hand so warm a kiss,  
 And had such manly ardour in his eye,  
 That each at other look'd half staringly:

## TO SOME LADIES.

WHAT though while the wonders of nature exploring,  
 I cannot your light, mazy footsteps attend;  
 Nor listen to accents, that almost adoring,  
 Bless Cynthia's face, the enthusiast's friend:

Yet over the steep, whence the mountain stream rushes, 5  
 With you, kindest friends, in idea I rove;  
 Mark the clear tumbling crystal, its passionate gushes,  
 Its spray that the wild flower kindly bedews.

Why linger you so, the wild labyrinth strolling?  
 Why breathless, unable your bliss to declare? 10  
 Ah! you list to the nightingale's tender condoling,  
 Responsive to sylphs, in the moon-beamy air.

'Tis morn, and the flowers with dew are yet drooping,  
 I see you are treading the verge of the sea:  
 And now! ah, I see it — you just now are stooping 15  
 To pick up the keep-sake intended for me.

If a cherub, on pinions of silver descending,  
 Had brought me a gem from the fret-work of heaven;  
 And smiles, with his star-cheering voice sweetly blending,  
 The blessings of Tighe had melodiously given; 20

It had not created a warmer emotion  
 Than the present, fair nymphs, I was blest with from you,  
 Than the shell, from the bright golden sands of the ocean  
 Which the emerald waves at your feet gladly threw.

For, indeed, 'tis a sweet and peculiar pleasure, 25  
 (And blissful is he who such happiness finds,)  
 To possess but a span of the hour of leisure,  
 In elegant, pure, and aerial minds.

---

(20) The reference to Mrs. Tighe, the authoress of the now almost forgotten poem of *Psyche*, is significant as an indication of the poet's taste in verse at this period.



ON RECEIVING A CURIOUS SHELL, AND A COPY OF  
VERSES, FROM THE SAME LADIES.

HAST thou from the caves of Golconda, a gem  
Pure as the ice-drop that froze on the mountain?  
Bright as the humming-bird's green diadem,  
When it flutters in sun-beams that shine through a fountain?

Hast thou a goblet for dark sparkling wine? 5  
That goblet right heavy, and massy, and gold?  
And splendidly mark'd with the story divine  
Of Armida the fair, and Rinaldo the bold?

Hast thou a steed with a mane richly flowing? 10  
Hast thou a sword that thine enemy's smart is?  
Hast thou a trumpet rich melodies blowing?  
And wear'st thou the shield of the fam'd Britomartis?

What is it that hangs from thy shoulder, so brave,  
Embroider'd with many a spring peering flower?  
Is it a scarf that thy fair lady gave? 15  
And hastest thou now to that fair lady's bower?

ON RECEIVING A CURIOUS SHELL.

21

I will tell thee my blisses, which richly abound  
 In magical powers to bless, and to sooth. 20

On this scroll thou seest written in characters fair  
 A sun-beamy tale of a wreath, and a chain;  
 And, warrior, it nurtures the property rare  
 Of charming my mind from the trammels of pain.

This canopy mark: 'tis the work of a fay; 25  
 Beneath its rich shade did King Oberon languish,  
 When lovely Titania was far, far away,  
 And cruelly left him to sorrow, and anguish.

There, oft would he bring from his soft sighing lute  
 Wild strains to which, spell-bound, the nightingales listen'd; 30  
 The wondering spirits of heaven were mute,  
 And tears 'mong the dewdrops of morning oft glisten'd.

In this little dome, all those melodies strange,  
 Soft, plaintive, and melting, for ever will sigh;  
 Nor e'er will the notes from their tenderness change; 35  
 Nor e'er will the music of Oberon die.

So, when I am in a voluptuous vein,  
 I pillow my head on the sweets of the rose,  
 And list to the tale of the wreath, and the chain,  
 Till its echoes depart; then I sink to repose. 40

Adieu, valiant Eric! with joy thou art crown'd;  
 Full many the glories that brighten thy youth,  
 I too have my blisses, which richly abound  
 In magical powers, to bless and to sooth.

---

In line 37 we have *And* for *So*, and in line 39 *song* for *tale*. None of these variations are shown by the other copy, which corresponds almost exactly with the volume of 1817, but reads line 31 thus:

The wandering spirits of Heaven are mute.

TO —

**H**ADST thou liv'd in days of old,  
 O what wonders had been told  
 Of thy lively countenance,  
 And thy humid eyes that dance  
 In the midst of their own brightness; 5  
 In the very fane of lightness.  
 Over which thine eyebrows, leaning,  
 Picture out each lovely meaning:  
 In a dainty bend they lie,  
 Like to streaks across the sky, 10  
 Or the feathers from a crow,  
 Fallen on a bed of snow.  
 Of thy dark hair that extends  
 Into many graceful bends:  
 As the leaves of Hellebore 15  
 Turn to whence they sprung before.  
 And behind each ample curl  
 Peeps the richness of a pearl.  
 Downward too flows many a tress  
 With a glossy waviness: 20

TO HOPE.

23

Hadst thou liv'd when chivalry  
Lifted up her lance on high,  
Tell me what thou wouldst have been?  
Ah! I see the silver sheen  
Of thy broider'd, floating vest 45  
Cov'ring half thine ivory breast;  
Which, O heavens! I should see,  
But that cruel destiny  
Has plac'd a golden cuirass there;  
Keeping secret what is fair. 50  
Like sunbeams in a cloudlet nested  
Thy locks in knightly casque are rested:  
O'er which bend four milky plumes  
Like the gentle lilly's blooms  
Springing from a costly vase. 55  
See with what a stately pace  
Comes thine alabaster steed;  
Servant of heroic deed!  
O'er his loins, his trappings glow  
Like the northern lights on snow. 60  
Mount his back! thy sword unsheath!  
Sign of the enchanter's death;  
Bane of every wicked spell;  
Silencer of dragon's yell.  
Alas! thou this wilt never do: 65  
Thou art an enchantress too,  
And wilt surely never spill  
Blood of those whose eyes can kill.

TO HOPE.

WHEN by my solitary hearth I sit,  
And hateful thoughts enwrap my soul in gloom;  
When no fair dreams before my "mind's eye" flit,  
And the bare heath of life presents no bloom;  
Sweet Hope, ethereal balm upon me shed, 5  
And wave thy silver pinions o'er my head.

When'er I wander, at the fall of night,  
Where woven boughs shut out the moon's bright ray,  
Should sad Despondency my musings fright,  
And frown, to drive fair Cheerfulness away, 10

Peep with the moon-beams through the leafy roof,  
And keep that fiend Despondence far aloof.

Should Disappointment, parent of Despair,  
Strive for her son to seize my careless heart;  
When, like a cloud, he sits upon the air, 15  
Preparing on his spell-bound prey to dart:  
Chace him away, sweet Hope, with visage bright,  
And fright him as the morning frightens night!

When'er the fate of those I hold most dear  
Tells to my fearful breast a tale of sorrow, 20  
O bright-eyed Hope, my morbid fancy cheer;  
Let me awhile thy sweetest comforts borrow:  
Thy heaven-born radiance around me shed,  
And wave thy silver pinions o'er my head!

Should e'er unhappy love my bosom pain, 25  
From cruel parents, or relentless fair;  
O let me think it is not quite in vain  
To sigh out sonnets to the midnight air!  
Sweet Hope, ethereal balm upon me shed,  
And wave thy silver pinions o'er my head! 30

## IMITATION OF SPENSER.

\* \* \* \* \*

**N**OW Morning from her orient chamber came,  
 And her first footsteps touch'd a verdant hill;  
 Crowning its lawny crest with amber flame,  
 Silv'ring the untainted gushes of its rill;  
 Which, pure from mossy beds, did down distill, 5  
 And after parting beds of simple flowers,  
 By many streams a little lake did fill,  
 Which round its marge reflected woven bowers,  
**And**, in its middle space, a sky that never lowers.

There the king-fisher saw his plumage bright 10  
 Vieing with fish of brilliant dye below;  
 Whose silken fins, and golden scales' light  
 Cast upward, through the waves, a ruby glow:  
 There saw the swan his neck of arched snow,  
 And oar'd himself along with majesty; 15  
 Sparkled his jetty eyes; his feet did show  
 Beneath the waves like Afric's ebony,  
**And** on his back a fay reclin'd voluptuously.

Ah! could I tell the wonders of an isle 20  
 That in that fairest lake had placed been,  
 I could e'en Dido of her grief beguile;  
 Or rob from aged Lear his bitter teen:  
 For sure so fair a place was never seen,  
 Of all that ever charm'd romantic eye:  
 It seem'd an emerald in the silver sheen 25  
 Of the bright waters; or as when on high,  
**Through** clouds of fleecy white, laughs the cœrulean sky.

---

The copy of these stanzas in Tom Keats's copy-book has a reading in line 12 which ought perhaps to supersede the printed text of 1817, namely, *golden scales light*. It seems highly likely that Keats really meant to carry his archaism to the extent of making *scales* a dissyllable, especially as the metre is thus corrected. Lord Houghton states on the authority of the notes of Charles Armitage Brown, given to his lordship in 1832, that this is the earliest known composition of Keats, and was written while he was living at Edmonton.

And all around it dipp'd luxuriously  
 Slopings of verdure through the glossy tide,  
 Which, as it were in gentle amity, 30  
 Rippled delighted up the flowery side ;  
 As if to glean the ruddy tears, it try'd,  
 Which fell profusely from the rose-tree stem !  
 Haply it was the workings of its pride,  
 In strife to throw upon the shore a gem 35  
 Outvieing all the buds in Flora's diadem.

\* \* \* \* \*

**W**OMAN! when I behold thee flippant, vain,  
 Inconstant, childish, proud, and full of fancies ;  
 Without that modest softening that enhances  
 The downcast eye, repentant of the pain  
 That its mild light creates to heal again : 5  
 E'en then, elate, my spirit leaps, and prances,  
 E'en then my soul with exultation dances  
 For that to love, so long, I've dormant lain :  
 But when I see thee meek, and kind, and tender,  
 Heavens ! how desperately do I adore 10

*WOMAN! WHEN I BEHOLD THEE.*

27

My ear is open like a greedy shark,  
To catch the tunings of a voice divine.

Ah! who can e'er forget so fair a being?

Who can forget her half retiring sweets?

30

God! she is like a milk-white lamb that bleats

For man's protection. Surely the All-seeing,

Who joys to see us with his gifts agreeing,

Will never give him pinions, who intreats.

Such innocence to ruin, — who vilely cheats

35

A dove-like bosom. In truth there is no freeing

One's thoughts from such a beauty; when I hear

A lay that once I saw her hand awake,

Her form seems floating palpable, and near;

Had I e'er seen her from an arbour take

A dewy flower, oft would that hand appear,

And o'er my eyes the trembling moisture shake.



## EPISTLES.

"Among the rest a shepherd (though but young  
Yet hartned to his pipe) with all the skill  
His few yeeres could, began to fit his quill."  
Britannia's Pastorals. — BROWNE.

TO GEORGE FELTON MATHEW.

SWEET are the pleasures that to verse belong,  
And doubly sweet a brotherhood in song;  
Nor can remembrance, Mathew! bring to view  
A fate more pleasing, a delight more true  
Than that in which the brother Poets joy'd,

*EPISTLE TO GEORGE FELTON MATHEW.* 29

Or again witness what with thee I've seen, 25  
The dew by fairy feet swept from the green,  
After a night of some quaint jubilee  
Which every elf and fay had come to see :  
When bright processions took their airy march  
Beneath the curved moon's triumphal arch. 30

But might I now each passing moment give  
To the coy muse, with me she would not live  
In this dark city, nor would condescend  
'Mid contradictions her delights to lend,  
Should e'er the fine-ey'd maid to me be kind, 35  
Ah ! surely it must be whene'er I find  
Some flowery spot, sequester'd, wild, romantic,  
That often must have seen a poet frantic ;  
Where oaks, that erst the Druid knew, are growing,  
And flowers, the glory of one day, are blowing ; 40  
Where the dark-leav'd laburnum's drooping clusters  
Reflect athwart the stream their yellow lustres,  
And interwin'd the cassia's arms unite,  
With its own drooping buds, but very white.  
Where on one side are covert branches hung, 45  
'Mong which the nightingales have always sung  
In leafy quiet : where to pry, aloof,  
Atween the pillars of the sylvan roof,  
Would be to find where violet beds were nestling,  
And where the bee with cowslip bells was wrestling. 50  
There must be too a ruin dark, and gloomy,  
To say " joy not too much in all that's bloomy."

Yet this is vain — O Mathew lend thy aid  
To find a place where I may greet the maid —  
Where we may soft humanity put on, 55  
And sit, and rhyme and think on Chatterton ;  
And that warm-hearted Shakspeare sent to meet him  
Four laurell'd spirits, heaven-ward to intreat him.  
With reverence would we speak of all the sages  
Who have left streaks of light athwart their ages : 60  
And thou shouldst moralize on Milton's blindness,  
And mourn the fearful dearth of human kindness  
To those who strove with the bright golden wing  
Of genius, to flap away each sting  
Thrown by the pitiless world. We next could tell 65  
Of those who in the cause of freedom fell ;

Of our own Alfred, of Helvetian Tell;  
 Of him whose name to ev'ry heart's a solace,  
 High-minded and unbending William Wallace,  
 While to the rugged north our musing turns 70  
 We well might drop a tear for him, and Burns.

Felton! without incitements such as these,  
 How vain for me the niggard Muse to tease:  
 For thee, she will thy every dwelling grace,  
 And make "a sun-shine in a shady place:" 75  
 For thou wast once a floweret blooming wild,  
 Close to the source, bright, pure, and undefil'd,  
 Whence gush the streams of song: in happy hour  
 Came chaste Diana from her shady bower,  
 Just as the sun was from the east uprising; 80  
 And, as for him some gift she was devising,  
 Beheld thee, pluck'd thee, cast thee in the stream  
 To meet her glorious brother's greeting beam.  
 I marvel much that thou hast never told  
 How, from a flower, into a fish of gold 85  
 Apollo chang'd thee; how thou next didst seem  
 A black-ey'd swan upon the widening stream;  
 And when thou first didst in that mirror trace  
 The placid features of a human face:  
 That thou hast never told thy trunks' strange

*EPISTLE TO GEORGE KEATS.*

31

Or, on the wavy grass outstretch'd supinely,  
 Pry 'mong the stars, to strive to think divinely:  
 That I should never hear Apollo's song,  
 Though feathery clouds were floating all along 10  
 The purple west, and, two bright streaks between,  
 The golden lyre itself were dimly seen:  
 That the still murmur of the honey bee  
 Would never teach a rural song to me:  
 That the bright glance from beauty's eyelids slanting 15  
 Would never make a lay of mine enchanting,  
 Or warm my breast with ardour to unfold  
 Some tale of love and arms in time of old.

But there are times, when those that love the bay,  
 Fly from all sorrowing far, far away; 20  
 A sudden glow comes on them, nought they see  
 In water, earth, or air, but poesy.  
 It has been said, dear George, and true I hold it,  
 (For knightly Spenser to Libertas told it,  
 That when a Poet is in such a trance, 25  
 In air he sees white coursers paw, and prance,  
 Bestriden of gay knights, in gay apparel,  
 Who at each other tilt in playful quarrel,  
 And what we, ignorantly, sheet-lightning call,  
 Is the swift opening of their wide portal, 30  
 When the bright warder blows his trumpet clear,  
 Whose tones reach nought on earth but Poet's ear.  
 When these enchanted portals open wide,  
 And through the light the horsemen swiftly glide,  
 The Poet's eye can reach those golden halls, 35  
 And view the glory of their festivals:  
 Their ladies fair, that in the distance seem  
 Fit for the silv'ring of a seraph's dream;  
 Their rich brimm'd goblets, that incessant run  
 Like the bright spots that move about the sun; 40  
 And, when upheld, the wine from each bright jar  
 Pours with the lustre of a falling star.  
 Yet further off, are dimly seen their bowers,

(24) See note to line 44, page 35.

(37) The transcript reads *bright* for *fair*.

(42) Hunt (see Appendix) notes this comparison of poured wine to a falling star as an instance of Keats's early "tendency to notice everything too indiscriminately and without an eye to natural proportion and effect;" and the comparison in verses 48-50 is charged with the same fault.

Of which, no mortal eye can reach the flowers ;  
 And 'tis right just, for well Apollo knows 45  
 'Twould make the Poet quarrel with the rose.  
 All that's reveal'd from that far seat of blisses,  
 Is, the clear fountains' interchanging kisses,  
 As gracefully descending, light and thin,  
 Like silver streaks across a dolphin's fin, 50  
 When he upswimmeth from the coral caves,  
 And sports with half his tail above the waves.

These wonders strange he sees, and many more,  
 Whose head is pregnant with poetic lore.  
 Should he upon an evening ramble fare 55  
 With forehead to the soothing breezes bare,  
 Would he naught see but the dark, silent blue  
 With all its diamonds trembling through and through?  
 Or the coy moon, when in the waviness  
 Of whitest clouds she does her beauty dress, 60  
 And staidly paces higher up, and higher,  
 Like a sweet nun in holy-day attire?  
 Ah, yes ! much more would start into his sight —  
 The revelries, and mysteries of night :  
 And should I ever see them, I will tell you 65  
 Such tales as needs must with amazement spell you.

“ My happy thoughts sententious ; he will teem  
 “ With lofty periods when my verses fire him,  
 “ And then I'll stoop from heaven to inspire him. 80  
 “ Lays have I left of such a dear delight  
 “ That maids will sing them on their bridal night.  
 “ Gay villagers, upon a morn of May,  
 “ When they have tir'd their gentle limbs with play,  
 “ And form'd a snowy circle on the grass, 85  
 “ And plac'd in midst of all that lovely lass  
 “ Who chosen is their queen, — with her fine head  
 “ Crowned with flowers purple, white, and red :  
 “ For there the lilly, and the musk-rose, sighing,  
 “ Are emblems true of hapless lovers dying : 90  
 “ Between her breasts, that never yet felt trouble,  
 “ A bunch of violets full blown, and double,  
 “ Serenely sleep : — she from a casket takes  
 “ A little book, — and then a joy awakes  
 “ About each youthful heart, — with stifled cries, 95  
 “ And rubbing of white hands, and sparkling eyes :  
 “ For she's to read a tale of hopes, and fears ;  
 “ One that I foster'd in my youthful years :  
 “ The pearls, that on each glist'ning circle sleep,  
 “ Gush ever and anon with silent creep, 100  
 “ Lur'd by the innocent dimples. To sweet rest  
 “ Shall the dear babe, upon its mother's breast,  
 “ Be lull'd with songs of mine. Fair world, adieu !  
 “ Thy dales, and hills, are fading from my view :  
 “ Swiftly I mount, upon wide spreading pinions, 105  
 “ Far from the narrow bounds of thy dominions.  
 “ Full joy I feel, while thus I cleave the air,  
 “ That my soft verse will charm thy daughters fair,  
 “ And warm thy sons ! ” Ah, my dear friend and brother,  
 Could I, at once, my mad ambition smother, 110  
 For tasting joys like these, sure I should be  
 Happier, and dearer to society.  
 At times, 'tis true, I've felt relief from pain  
 When some bright thought has darted through my brain :  
 Through all that day I've felt a greater pleasure 115  
 Than if I'd brought to light a hidden treasure.  
 As to my sonnets, though none else should heed them,  
 I feel delighted, still, that you should read them.

(86) The transcript reads —

Placing in midst thereof, that happy lass.

(118) The transcript reads *will* for *should*.

Of late, too, I have had much calm enjoyment,  
 Stretch'd on the grass at my best lov'd employment 120  
 Of scribbling lines for you. These things I thought  
 While, in my face, the freshest breeze I caught.  
 E'en now I'm pillow'd on a bed of flowers  
 That crowns a lofty clift, which proudly towers  
 Above the ocean-waves. The stalks, and blades, 125  
 Chequer my tablet with their quivering shades.  
 On one side is a field of drooping oats,  
 Through which the poppies show their scarlet coats ;  
 So pert and useless, that they bring to mind  
 The scarlet coats that pester human-kind. 130  
 And on the other side, outspread, is seen  
 Ocean's blue mantle streak'd with purple, and green.  
 Now 'tis I see a canvass'd ship, and now  
 Mark the bright silver curling round her prow.  
 I see the lark down-dropping to his nest, 135  
 And the broad winged sea-gull never at rest ;  
 For when no more he spreads his feathers free,  
 His breast is dancing on the restless sea.  
 Now I direct my eyes into the west,  
 Which at this moment is in sunbeams drest : 140  
 Why westward turn? 'Twas but to say adieu !  
 'Twas but to kiss my hand, dear George, to you !

*EPISTLE TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE.* 35

In milky nest, and sip them off at leisure. 10  
 But not a moment can he there insure them,  
 Nor to such downy rest can he allure them ;  
 For down they rush as though they would be free,  
 And drop like hours into eternity.  
 Just like that bird am I in loss of time, 15  
 Whene'er I venture on the stream of rhyme ;  
 With shatter'd boat, oar snapt, and canvass rent,  
 I slowly sail, scarce knowing my intent ;  
 Still scooping up the water with my fingers,  
 In which a trembling diamond never lingers. 20  
 By this, friend Charles, you may full plainly see  
 Why I have never penn'd a line to thee :  
 Because my thoughts were never free, and clear,  
 And little fit to please a classic ear ;  
 Because my wine was of too poor a savour 25  
 For one whose palate gladdens in the flavour  
 Of sparkling Helicon : — small good it were  
 To take him to a desert rude, and bare,  
 Who had on Baiæ's shore reclin'd at ease,  
 While Tasso's page was floating in a breeze 30  
 That gave soft music from Armida's bowers,  
 Mingled with fragrance from her rarest flowers :  
 Small good to one who had by Mulla's stream  
 Fondled the maidens with the breasts of cream ;  
 Who had beheld Belphebe in a brook, 35  
 And lovely Una in a leafy nook,  
 And Archimago leaning o'er his book :  
 Who had of all that's sweet tasted, and seen,  
 From silv'ry ripple, up to beauty's queen ;  
 From the sequester'd haunts of gay Titania, 40  
 To the blue dwelling of divine Urania :  
 One, who, of late, had ta'en sweet forest walks  
 With him who elegantly chats, and talks —  
 The wrong'd *Libertas*, — who has told you stories  
 Of laurel chaplets, and Apollo's glories ; 45  
 Of troops chivalrous prancing through a city,  
 And tearful ladies made for love, and pity :  
 With many else which I have never known.  
 Thus have I thought ; and days on days have flown  
 Slowly, or rapidly — unwilling still 50  
 For you to try my dull, unlearned quill.

---

(44) Mrs. Charles Cowden Clarke, speaking from knowledge derived from her husband, tells me there is no doubt whatever about *Libertas* being, as one would naturally imagine, a name for Leigh Hunt.



Nor should I now, but that I've known you long;  
 That you first taught me all the sweets of song:  
 The grand, the sweet, the terse, the free, the fine;  
 What swell'd with pathos, and what right divine: 55  
 Spenserian vowels that elope with ease,  
 And float along like birds o'er summer seas;  
 Miltonian storms, and more, Miltonian tenderness;  
 Michael in arms, and more, meek Eve's fair slenderness.  
 Who read for me the sonnet swelling loudly 60  
 Up to its climax and then dying proudly?  
 Who found for me the grandeur of the ode,  
 Growing, like Atlas, stronger from its load?  
 Who let me taste that more than cordial dram,  
 The sharp, the rapier-pointed epigram? 65  
 Show'd me that epic was of all the king,  
 Round, vast, and spanning all like Saturn's ring?  
 You too upheld the veil from Clio's beauty,  
 And pointed out the patriot's stern duty;  
 The might of Alfred, and the shaft of Tell; 70  
 The hand of Brutus, that so grandly fell  
 Upon a tyrant's head. Ah! had I never seen,  
 Or known your kindness, what might I have been?  
 What my enjoyments in my youthful years,  
 Bereft of all that now my life endears? 75

*EPISTLE TO CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE.* 37

As though she were reclining in a bed 95  
Of bean blossoms, in heaven freshly shed.  
No sooner had I stepp'd into these pleasures  
Than I began to think of rhymes and measures :  
The air that floated by me seem'd to say  
" Write ! thou wilt never have a better day." 100  
And so I did. When many lines I'd written,  
Though with their grace I was not oversmitten,  
Yet, as my hand was warm, I thought I'd better  
Trust to my feelings, and write you a letter.  
Such an attempt requir'd an inspiration 105  
Of a peculiar sort, — a consummation ; —  
Which, had I felt, these scribblings might have been  
Verses from which the soul would never wean :  
But many days have past since last my heart  
Was warm'd luxuriously by divine Mozart ; 110  
By Arne delighted, or by Handel madden'd ;  
Or by the song of Erin pierc'd and sadden'd :  
What time you were before the music sitting,  
And the rich notes to each sensation fitting.  
Since I have walk'd with you through shady lanes 115  
That freshly terminate in open plains,  
And revel'd in a chat that ceased not  
When at night-fall among your books we got :  
No, nor when supper came, nor after that, —  
Nor when reluctantly I took my hat ; 120  
No, nor till cordially you shook my hand  
Mid-way between our homes : — your accents bland  
Still sounded in my ears, when I no more  
Could hear your footsteps touch the grav'ly floor.  
Sometimes I lost them, and then found again ; 125  
You chang'd the footpath for the grassy plain.  
In those still moments I have wish'd you joys  
That well you know to honor : — " Life's very toys  
" With him," said I, " will take a pleasant charm ;  
" It cannot be that ought will work him harm." 130  
These thoughts now come o'er me with all their might : —  
Again I shake your hand, — friend Charles, good night.

SEPTEMBER, 1816.

(130) Hunt says (see Appendix), in evident allusion to Keats's prowess as a boxer and readiness to back his friends — "we can only add, without any disrespect to the graver warmth of our young poet, that if Ought attempted it, Ought would find he had stout work to do with more than one person." The student will probably turn to the posthumous poems and compare these epistles with that to John Hamilton Reynolds written in 1818.

## SONNETS.

### I.

TO MY BROTHER GEORGE.

**M**ANY the wonders I this day have seen:  
The sun, when first he kist away the tears  
That fill'd the eyes of morn; — the laurell'd peers  
Who from the feathery gold of evening lean; —

---

Among the late Joseph Severn's Keats relics were a few leaves torn from a small oblong pocket note-book, bearing pencilled sketches by Keats of rude figures &c., and what seem to be the first drafts (in pencil also) of this sonnet and the two quatrains of the sonnet *To my Brothers*. The erasures are not such as to indicate any want of fluency. I have collated this draft with a careful transcript made by George

The ocean with its vastness, its blue green,  
 Its ships, its rocks, its caves, its hopes, its fears, —  
 Its voice mysterious, which whoso hears  
 Must think on what will be, and what has been.  
 E'en now, dear George, while this for you I write,  
 Cynthia is from her silken curtains peeping  
 So scantily, that it seems her bridal night,  
 And she her half-discover'd revels keeping.  
 But what, without the social thought of thee,  
 Would be the wonders of the sky and sea?

## II.

TO ———.

HAD I a man's fair form, then might my sighs  
 Be echoed swiftly through that ivory shell  
 Thine ear, and find thy gentle heart; so well  
 Would passion arm me for the enterprize:  
 But ah! I am no knight whose foeman dies;  
 No cuirass glistens on my bosom's swell;  
 I am no happy shepherd of the dell  
 Whose lips have trembled with a maiden's eyes.  
 Yet must I dote upon thee, — call thee sweet,  
 Sweeter by far than Hybla's honied roses  
 When steep'd in dew rich to intoxication.  
 Ah! I will taste that dew, for me 't is meet,  
 And when the moon her pallid face discloses,  
 I'll gather some by spells, and incantation.

---

Tom Keats's copy-book contains a transcript of this sonnet showing no variation in the text, except by a copyist's error at the end, — the last word being *incantations*. There is no heading beyond the word *Sonnet*, no date, and no clue to the identity of the person addressed.

## III.

WRITTEN ON THE DAY THAT MR. LEIGH HUNT LEFT PRISON.

WHAT though, for showing truth to flatter'd state,  
 Kind Hunt was shut in prison, yet has he,  
 In his immortal spirit, been as free  
 As the sky-searching lark, and as elate.  
 Minion of grandeur! think you he did wait?  
 Think you he nought but prison walls did see,  
 Till, so unwilling, thou unturn'dst the key?  
 Ah, no! far happier, nobler was his fate!

---

The Hunts left prison on the 2nd of February 1815, according to Leigh Hunt's own account, though Thornton Hunt says the 3rd at page 99, Volume I, of the *Correspondence* (1862). The expressions employed towards Leigh Hunt in this sonnet are not, one would say, intemperate; and yet, adding the innocuous phrase in *Sleep and Poetry* (lines 354-5),

It was a poet's house who keeps the keys  
 Of pleasure's temple,

and the fact that the little volume was dedicated to Hunt, Professor Wilson, well described by Home as "the clown of *Blackwood's Magazine*" found sufficient ground

In Spenser's halls he stray'd, and bowers fair,  
 Culling enchanted flowers; and he flew  
 With daring Milton through the fields of air:  
 To regions of his own his genius true  
 Took happy flights. Who shall his fame impair  
 When thou art dead, and all thy wretched crew?

## IV.

HOW many bards gild the lapses of time!  
 A few of them have ever been the food  
 Of my delighted fancy, — I could brood  
 Over their beauties, earthly, or sublime:  
 And often, when I sit me down to rhyme,  
 These will in throngs before my mind intrude:  
 But no confusion, no disturbance rude  
 Do they occasion; 't is a pleasing chime.  
 So the unnumber'd sounds that evening store;  
 The songs of birds — the whisp'ring of the leaves  
 The voice of waters — the great bell that heaves  
 With solemn sound, — and thousand others more,  
 That distance of recognizance bereaves,  
 Make pleasing music, and not wild uproar.

---

of this Paper from Prison" occupied the first page of *The Examiner* for Sunday, the 5th of February 1815. The opening is as follows: —

"The two years' imprisonment inflicted on the Proprietors of this Paper for differing with the *Morning Post* on the merits of the PRINCE REGENT, expired on Thursday last; and on that day accordingly we quitted our respective jails." On the subject of how they felt on the occasion, Hunt excuses himself from particularity, but observes with characteristic pleasantness, "there is a feeling of space and of airy clearness about everything, which is alternately delightful and painful." The greater part of the article is far from being in Hunt's best manner; but the end should stand on record here: "We feel that we have driven another nail or two into the old oaken edifice of English Liberty; and if we have rapped our fingers a little in the operation, it is only a laugh and a wring of the hands, and all is as it should be."

Hunt adduces the first line (see Appendix) as an example of Keats's "sense of the proper variety of versification without a due consideration of its principles," and very justly adds, "by no contrivance of any sort can we prevent this from jumping out of the heroic measure into mere rhythmicality." Clarke records that when this and one or two other early poems of Keats were first shown by him to Hunt, Horace Smith, being present, remarked on the 13th line, "What a well-condensed expression for a youth so young!"

## V.

TO A FRIEND WHO SENT ME SOME ROSES.

AS late I rambled in the happy fields,  
 What time the sky-lark shakes the tremulous dew  
 From his lush clover covert; — when anew  
 Adventurous knights take up their dinted shields:  
 I saw the sweetest flower wild nature yields,  
 A fresh-blown musk-rose; 't was the first that threw  
 Its sweets upon the summer: graceful it grew  
 As is the wand that queen Titania wields.  
 And, as I feasted on its fragrancy,  
 I thought the garden-rose it far excell'd:  
 But when, O Wells! thy roses came to me  
 My sense with their deliciousness was spell'd:  
 Soft voices had they, that with tender plea  
 Whisper'd of peace, and truth, and friendliness unquell'd.

---

This sonnet was addressed to Charles Wells, the author of *Stories after Nature*, *Joseph and his Brethren*, and a few fugitive compositions. His great dramatic

## VI.

TO G. A. W.

**N**YMPH of the downward smile and sidelong glance,  
 In what diviner moments of the day  
 Art thou most lovely? — when gone far astray  
 Into the labyrinths of sweet utterance,  
 Or when serenely wand'ring in a trance  
 Of sober thought? — or when starting away  
 With careless robe to meet the morning ray  
 Thou spar'st the flowers in thy mazy dance?  
 Haply 't is when thy ruby lips part sweetly,  
 And so remain, because thou listenest:  
 But thou to please wert nurtured so completely  
 That I can never tell what mood is best.  
 I shall as soon pronounce which Grace more neatly  
 Trips it before Apollo than the rest.

## VII.

**O** SOLITUDE! if I must with thee dwell,  
 Let it not be among the jumbled heap  
 Of murky buildings; climb with me to the steep, —  
 Nature's observatory — whence the dell,  
 Its flowery slopes, its river's crystal swell,

---

The subject of this sonnet was Miss Georgiana Augusta Wylie, afterwards the wife of Keats's brother George, and now (1881) Mrs. Jeffrey. I should not have connected the sonnet positively with this lady had I not seen the manuscript in Keats's writing, headed "To Miss Wylie." The manuscript corresponds verbatim with the sonnet as published in 1817; but in the two quatrains the better punctuation is that of the manuscript; and I have followed it in the text. The thirteenth line shows one correction: *Nymph* was originally written where *Grace* now stands. In a transcript in Tom Keats's copy-book we read *what grace*; and the sonnet is headed "Sonnet to a Lady," and dated "Dec. 1816."

This Sonnet, published in *The Examiner* for the 5th of May 1816, signed "J. K.," is stated by Charles Cowden Clarke (*Gentleman's Magazine* for February 1874) to be "Keats's first published poem." In Tom Keats's copy-book it is headed "Sonnet to Solitude," and undated. The only variation is in line 9, — *I'd* for *I'll*. *The Examiner* reads *rivers* for *river's* in line 5, and lines 9 and 10 stand thus —

Ah! fain would I frequent such scenes with thee;  
 But the sweet converse of an innocent mind.



May seem a span ; let me thy vigils keep  
'Mongst boughs pavillion'd, where the deer's swift leap  
Startles the wild bee from the fox-glove bell.  
But though I'll gladly trace these scenes with thee,  
Yet the sweet converse of an innocent mind,  
Whose words are images of thoughts refin'd,  
Is my soul's pleasure ; and it sure must be  
Almost the highest bliss of human-kind,  
When to thy haunts two kindred spirits flee.

## VIII.

## TO MY BROTHERS.

**S**MALL, busy flames play through the fresh laid coals,  
And their faint cracklings o'er our silence creep  
Like whispers of the household gods that keep  
A gentle empire o'er fraternal souls.  
And while, for rhymes, I search around the poles,  
Your eyes are fix'd, as in poetic sleep.

This is your birth-day Tom, and I rejoice  
 That thus it passes smoothly, quietly.  
 Many such eves of gently whisp'ring noise  
 May we together pass, and calmly try  
 What are this world's true joys, — ere the great voice,  
 From its fair face, shall bid our spirits fly.

NOVEMBER 18, 1816.

## IX.\*

KEEN, fitful gusts are whisp'ring here and there  
 Among the bushes half leafless, and dry;  
 The stars look very cold about the sky,  
 And I have many miles on foot to fare.  
 Yet feel I little of the cool bleak air,  
 Or of the dead leaves rustling drearily,  
 Or of those silver lamps that burn on high,  
 Or of the distance from home's pleasant lair:  
 For I am brimfull of the friendliness  
 That in a little cottage I have found;  
 Of fair-hair'd Milton's eloquent distress,  
 And all his love for gentle Lycid drown'd:  
 Of lovely Laura in her light green dress,  
 And faithful Petrarch gloriously crown'd.

## X.†

TO one who has been long in city pent,  
 'Tis very sweet to look into the fair  
 And open face of heaven, — to breathe a prayer  
 Full in the smile of the blue firmament.  
 Who is more happy, when, with heart's content,

\* Clarke records that this sonnet was written on the occasion of Keats's first becoming acquainted with Leigh Hunt at the Cottage in the Vale of Health, Hampstead.

† In a transcript in the hand-writing of George Keats this sonnet is subscribed as "Written in the Fields — June 1816." The variations shown by this manuscript, no doubt correctly copied from the original, are, — in line 2, *upon* for *into*; in line 4 *bright* for *blue*; in line 5 *heart's* is written correctly, though *hearts* is wrongly

Fatigued he sinks into some pleasant lair  
Of wavy grass, and reads a debonair  
And gentle tale of love and languishment?  
Returning home at evening, with an ear  
Catching the notes of Philomel, — an eye  
Watching the sailing cloudlet's bright career,  
He mourns that day so soon has glided by:  
E'en like the passage of an angel's tear  
That falls through the clear ether silently.

## XI.

ON FIRST LOOKING INTO CHAPMAN'S HOMER.\*

MUCH have I travell'd in the realms of gold,  
And many goodly states and kingdoms seen;  
Round many western islands have I been  
Which bards in fealty to Apollo hold.  
Oft of one wide expanse had I been told  
That deep-brow'd Homer rul'd as his demesne;  
Yet did I never breathe its pure serene  
Till I heard Chapman speak out loud and bold:

Then felt I like some watcher of the skies  
 When a new planet swims into his ken;  
 Or like stout Cortez when with eagle eyes  
 He star'd at the Pacific — and all his men  
 Look'd at each other with a wild surmise —  
 Silent, upon a peak in Darien.

ation in line 7 is of value in connexion with one of the reminiscences of Clarke, who says the seventh line originally stood thus :

Yet could I never tell what men could mean

and that Keats substituted the reading of the text because he considered the first reading "bald, and too simply wondering." But he may have been actuated by another reason also, as thus : in an article headed "Young Poets" in *The Examiner* for the 1st of December 1816, Hunt had spoken in high praise of a set of Keats's manuscript poems shown to him, and had printed this one as given in Tom Keats's copy-book, with the remark that it contained "one incorrect rhyme." The only disputable rhyme is that of *mean* and *demesne*, and that is got rid of by the revision. "The rest of the composition," says Hunt, "with the exception of a little vagueness in calling the regions of poetry 'the realms of gold,' we do not hesitate to pronounce excellent, especially the last six lines. The word *swims* is complete; and the whole conclusion is equally powerful and quiet." He appears to have become reconciled to "the realms of gold" in later years, to judge from the close of that charming work *Imagination and Fancy*. Speaking of this sonnet he says at page 345 (I quote the third edition, dated 1846), — "'Stared' has been thought by some too violent, but it is precisely the word required by the occasion. The Spaniard was too original and ardent a man either to look, or to affect to look, coldly superior to it. His 'eagle eyes' are from life, as may be seen by Titian's portrait of him." Of the last line, which ends the poetry of *Imagination and Fancy*, Hunt says "We leave the reader standing upon it, with all the illimitable world of thought and feeling before him, to which his imagination will have been brought, while journeying through these 'realms of gold.'"

The last four lines seem to be a reminiscence of Robertson's History of America, recorded by Clarke as among Keats's later school reading; but, as Mr. Tennyson pointed out to Mr. Palgrave (*Golden Treasury*, 1861, page 320) the reference should really be to Balboa. From Hunt's remark about the portrait it is clear this was no mere slip of the pen: Cortez was the man whom Keats's imagination saw in the situation, and it is to be presumed that his memory betrayed him, for it seems unlikely that he met with the story elsewhere, told of Cortez. The passage in Robertson's History of America (Works, edition of 1817, Volume VII, page 287) is as follows:

"At length the Indians assured them, that from the top of the next mountain they should discover the ocean which was the object of their wishes. When, with infinite toil, they had climbed up the greater part of that steep ascent, Balboa commanded his men to halt, and advanced alone to the summit, that he might be the first who should enjoy a spectacle which he had so long desired. As soon as he beheld the South Sea stretching in endless prospect below him, he fell on his knees, and lifting up his hands to heaven, returned thanks to God, who had conducted him to a discovery so beneficial to his country, and so honourable to himself. His followers, observing his transports of joy, rushed forward to join in his wonder, exultation, and gratitude."

An account of this incident will also be found in Washington Irving's *Voyages and Discoveries of the Companions of Columbus*. The reader will of course turn to the Sonnet to Homer among the posthumous Poems of 1818, and read it in connexion with this one published by Keats. It is not difficult to decide which is the finer; but that, though not so great a sonnet as this, has some lines that are hardly indeed to be surpassed.

## XII.

ON LEAVING SOME FRIENDS AT AN EARLY HOUR.\*

GIVE me a golden pen, and let me lean  
On heap'd up flowers, in regions clear, and far;  
Bring me a tablet whiter than a star,  
Or hand of hymning angel, when 't is seen  
The silver strings of heavenly harp atween:  
And let there glide by many a pearly car,  
Pink robes, and wavy hair, and diamond jar,  
And half discovered wings, and glances keen.  
The while let music wander round my ears,  
And as it reaches each delicious ending,  
Let me write down a line of glorious tone,  
And full of many wonders of the spheres:  
For what a height my spirit is contending!  
'Tis not content so soon to be alone.

What when a stout unbending champion awes  
 Envy, and Malice to their native sty?  
 Unnumber'd souls breathe out a still applause,  
 Proud to behold him in his country's eye.

## XIV.

ADDRESSED TO THE SAME.\*

**G**REAT spirits now on earth are sojourning;  
 He of the cloud, the cataract, the lake,  
 Who on Helvellyn's summit, wide awake,  
 Catches his freshness from Archangel's wing:  
 He of the rose, the violet, the spring,  
 The social smile, the chain for Freedom's sake:  
 And lo! — whose stedfastness would never take  
 A meaner sound than Raphael's whispering.  
 And other spirits there are standing apart  
 Upon the forehead of the age to come;  
 These, these will give the world another heart,  
 And other pulses. Hear ye not the hum  
 Of mighty workings? —  
 Listen awhile ye nations, and be dumb.

## XV.

ON THE GRASSHOPPER AND CRICKET.†

**T**HE poetry of earth is never dead:  
 When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,  
 And hide in cooling trees, a voice will run  
 From hedge to hedge about the new-mown mead;  
 That is the Grasshopper's — he takes the lead

\* In Tom Keats's copy-book this Sonnet is headed simply "Sonnet" and is dated 316 merely. There are no variations. It is almost superfluous to identify the two men referred to in the first six lines — Wordsworth and Leigh Hunt.

† Clarke records that this sonnet was written at Leigh Hunt's cottage, on a challenge from Hunt. See Clarke's account in his *Recollections of Keats*; and see

In summer luxury, — he has never done  
 With his delights; for when tired out with fun  
 He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.  
 The poetry of earth is ceasing never:  
 On a lone winter evening, when the frost  
 Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills  
 The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,  
 And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,  
 The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

DECEMBER 30, 1816.

## XVI.

TO KOSCIUSKO.\*

GOOD Kosciusko, thy great name alone  
 Is a full harvest whence to reap high feeling;  
 It comes upon us like the glorious pealing  
 Of the wide spheres — an everlasting tone.  
 And now it tells me, that in worlds unknown,  
 The names of heroes, burst from clouds concealing,  
 And changed to harmonies, for ever stealing

XVII.

**H**APPY is England! I could be content  
To see no other verdure than its own;  
To feel no other breezes than are blown  
Through its tall woods with high romances blent  
Yet do I sometimes feel a languishment  
For skies Italian, and an inward groan  
To sit upon an Alp as on a throne,  
And half forget what world or worldling meant.  
Happy is England, sweet her artless daughters;  
Enough their simple loveliness for me,  
Enough their whitest arms in silence clinging:  
Yet do I often warmly burn to see  
Beauties of deeper glance, and hear their singing,  
And float with them about the summer waters.



## SLEEP AND POETRY.

" As I lay in my bed slepe full unmete  
Was unto me, but why that I ne might  
Rest I ne wist, for there n'as erthly wight  
[As I suppose] had more of hertis ese  
Than I, for I n'ad sicknesse nor diseise."

CHAUCER.

WHAT is more gentle than a wind in summer?  
What is more soothing than the pretty hummer  
That stays one moment in an open flower,  
And buzzes cheerily from bower to bower?  
What is more tranquil than a musk-rose blowing  
In a green island, far from all men's knowing?  
More healthful than the leafiness of dales?  
More secret than a nest of nightingales?  
More serene than Cordelia's countenance?

*SLEEP AND POETRY.*

53

Coming sometimes like fearful claps of thunder,  
Or the low rumblings earth's regions under ;  
And sometimes like a gentle whispering  
Of all the secrets of some wond'rous thing 30  
That breathes about us in the vacant air ;  
So that we look around with prying stare,  
Perhaps to see shapes of light, aerial lymning,  
And catch soft floatings from a faint-heard hymning ;  
To see the laurel wreath, on high suspended, 35  
That is to crown our name when life is ended.  
Sometimes it gives a glory to the voice,  
And from the heart up-springs, rejoice ! rejoice !  
Sounds which will reach the Framer of all things,  
And die away in ardent mutterings. 40

No one who once the glorious sun has seen,  
And all the clouds, and felt his bosom clean  
For his great Maker's presence, but must know  
What 't is I mean, and feel his being glow :  
Therefore no insult will I give his spirit, 45  
By telling what he sees from native merit.

O Poesy ! for thee I hold my pen  
That am not yet a glorious denizen  
Of thy wide heaven — Should I rather kneel  
Upon some mountain-top until I feel 50  
A glowing splendour round about me hung,  
And echo back the voice of thine own tongue?  
O Poesy ! for thee I grasp my pen  
That am not yet a glorious denizen  
Of thy wide heaven ; yet, to my ardent prayer, 55  
Yield from thy sanctuary some clear air,  
Smooth'd for intoxication by the breath  
Of flowering bays, that I may die a death  
Of luxury, and my young spirit follow  
The morning sun-beams to the great Apollo 60  
Like a fresh sacrifice ; or, if I can bear  
The o'erwhelming sweets, 'twill bring to me the fair  
Visions of all places : a bowery nook  
Will be elysium — an eternal book  
Whence I may copy many a lovely saying 65  
About the leaves, and flowers — about the playing  
Of nymphs in woods, and fountains ; and the shade  
Keeping a silence round a sleeping maid ;

And many a verse from so strange influence  
 That we must ever wonder how, and whence 70  
 It came. Also imaginings will hover  
 Round my fire-side, and haply there discover  
 Vistas of solemn beauty, where I'd wander  
 In happy silence, like the clear Meander  
 Through its lone vales; and where I found a spot 75  
 Of awfuller shade, or an enchanted grot,  
 Or a green hill o'erspread with chequer'd dress  
 Of flowers, and fearful from its loveliness,  
 Write on my tablets all that was permitted,  
 All that was for our human senses fitted. 80  
 Then the events of this wide world I'd seize  
 Like a strong giant, and my spirit tease  
 Till at its shoulders it should proudly see  
 Wings to find out an immortality.  
 Stop and consider! life is but a day; 85  
 A fragile dew-drop on its perilous way  
 From a tree's summit; a poor Indian's sleep  
 While his boat hastens to the monstrous steep  
 Of Montmorenci. Why so sad a moan?  
 Life is the rose's hope while yet unblown; 90  
 The reading of an ever-changing tale;  
 The light unlifting of a maiden's veil;

*SLEEP AND POETRY.*

55

A lovely tale of human life we'll read. 110  
And one will teach a tame dove how it best  
May fan the cool air gently o'er my rest ;  
Another, bending o'er her nimble tread,  
Will set a green robe floating round her head,  
And still will dance with ever varied ease, 115  
Smiling upon the flowers and the trees :  
Another will entice me on, and on  
Through almond blossoms and rich cinnamon ;  
Till in the bosom of a leafy world  
We rest in silence, like two gems upcurl'd 120  
In the recesses of a pearly shell.

And can I ever bid these joys farewell ?  
Yes, I must pass them for a nobler life,  
Where I may find the agonies, the strife  
Of human hearts : for lo ! I see afar, 125  
O'ersailing the blue cragginess, a car  
And steeds with streamy manes — the charioteer  
Looks out upon the winds with glorious fear :  
And now the numerous tramlings quiver lightly  
Along a huge cloud's ridge ; and now with sprightly 130  
Wheel downward come they into fresher skies,  
Tipt round with silver from the sun's bright eyes.  
Still downward with capacious whirl they glide ;  
And now I see them on a green-hill's side  
In breezy rest among the nodding stalks. 135  
The charioteer with wond'rous gesture talks  
To the trees and mountains ; and there soon appear  
Shapes of delight, of mystery, and fear,  
Passing along before a dusky space  
Made by some mighty oaks : as they would chase 140  
Some ever-fleeting music on they sweep.  
Lo ! how they murmur, laugh, and smile, and weep :  
Some with upholden hand and mouth severe ;  
Some with their faces muffled to the ear  
Between their arms ; some, clear in youthful bloom, 145  
Go glad and smilingly athwart the gloom ;  
Some looking back, and some with upward gaze ;  
Yes, thousands in a thousand different ways  
Flit onward — now a lovely wreath of girls  
Dancing their sleek hair into tangled curls ; 150  
And now broad wings. Most awfully intent  
The driver of those steeds is forward bent,

And seems to listen : O that I might know  
All that he writes with such a hurrying glow !

The visions all are fled — the car is fled 155  
Into the light of heaven, and in their stead  
A sense of real things comes doubly strong,  
And, like a muddy stream, would bear along  
My soul to nothingness : but I will strive  
Against all doubtings, and will keep alive 160  
The thought of that same chariot, and the strange  
Journey it went.

Is there so small a range  
In the present strength of manhood, that the high  
Imagination cannot freely fly  
As she was wont of old ? prepare her steeds, 165  
Paw up against the light, and do strange deeds  
Upon the clouds ? Has she not shown us all ?  
From the clear space of ether, to the small  
Breath of new buds unfolding ? From the meaning  
Of Jove's large eye-brow, to the tender greening 170  
Of April meadows ? Here her altar shone,  
E'en in this isle ; and who could paragon  
The fervid choir that lifted up a noise

*SLEEP AND POETRY.*

57

Why were ye not awake? But ye were dead  
To things ye knew not of, — were closely wed  
To musty laws lined out with wretched rule 195  
And compass vile: so that ye taught a school  
Of dolts to smooth, inlay, and clip, and fit,  
Till, like the certain wands of Jacob's wit,  
Their verses tallied. Easy was the task:  
A thousand handicraftsmen wore the mask 200  
Of Poesy. Ill-fated, impious race!  
That blasphem'd the bright Lyrist to his face,  
And did not know it, — no, they went about,  
Holding a poor, decrepid standard out  
Mark'd with most flimsy mottos, and in large 205  
The name of one Boileau!

O ye whose charge

It is to hover round our pleasant hills!  
Whose congregated majesty so fills  
My boundly reverence, that I cannot trace  
Your hallowed names, in this unholy place, 210  
So near those common folk; did not their shames  
Affright you? Did our old lamenting Thames  
Delight you? Did ye never cluster round  
Delicious Avon, with a mournful sound,  
And weep? Or did ye wholly bid adieu 215  
To regions where no more the laurel grew?  
Or did ye stay to give a welcoming  
To some lone spirits who could proudly sing  
Their youth away, and die? 'T was even so:  
But let me think away those times of woe: 220  
Now 't is a fairer season; ye have breathed  
Rich benedictions o'er us; ye have wreathed  
Fresh garlands: for sweet music has been heard  
In many places; — some has been upstirr'd  
From out its crystal dwelling in a lake, 225  
By a swan's ebon bill; from a thick brake,  
Nested and quiet in a valley mild,  
Bubbles a pipe; fine sounds are floating wild  
About the earth: happy are ye and glad.

These things are doubtless; yet in truth we've had 230  
Strange thunders from the potency of song;  
Mingled indeed with what is sweet and strong,  
From majesty: but in clear truth the themes

Are ugly clubs, the Poets Polyphemes  
 Disturbing the grand sea. A drainless shower 235  
 Of light is poesy; 't is the supreme of power;  
 'T is might half slumb'ring on its own right arm.  
 The very archings of her eye-lids charm  
 A thousand willing agents to obey,  
 And still she governs with the mildest sway: 240  
 But strength alone though of the Muses born  
 Is like a fallen angel: trees uptorn,  
 Darkness, and worms, and shrouds, and sepulchres  
 Delight it; for it feeds upon the burrs,  
 And thorns of life; forgetting the great end 245  
 Of poesy, that it should be a friend  
 To sooth the cares, and lift the thoughts of man.

Yet I rejoice: a myrtle fairer than  
 E'er grew in Paphos, from the bitter weeds  
 Lifts its sweet head into the air, and feeds 250  
 A silent space with ever sprouting green.  
 All tenderest birds there find a pleasant screen,  
 Creep through the shade with jaunty fluttering,  
 Nibble the little cupped flowers and sing.  
 Then let us clear away the choaking thorns 255  
 From round its gentle stem: let the young fawns

*SLEEP AND POETRY.*

59

That whining boyhood should with reverence bow  
Ere the dread thunderbolt could reach? How!  
If I do hide myself, it sure shall be 275  
In the very fane, the light of Poesy:  
If I do fall, at least I will be laid  
Beneath the silence of a poplar shade;  
And over me the grass shall be smooth shaven;  
And there shall be a kind memorial graven. 280  
But off Despondence! miserable bane!  
They should not know thee, who athirst to gain  
A noble end, are thirsty every hour.  
What though I am not wealthy in the dower  
Of spanning wisdom; though I do not know 285  
The shiftings of the mighty winds that blow  
Hither and thither all the changing thoughts  
Of man: though no great minist'ring reason sorts  
Out the dark mysteries of human souls  
To clear conceiving: yet there ever rolls 290  
A vast idea before me, and I glean  
Therefrom my liberty; thence too I've seen  
The end and aim of Poesy. 'T is clear  
As anything most true; as that the year  
Is made of the four seasons — manifest 295  
As a large cross, some old cathedral's crest,  
Lifted to the white clouds. Therefore should I  
Be but the essence of deformity,  
A coward, did my very eye-lids wink  
At speaking out what I have dar'd to think. 300  
Ah! rather let me like a madman run  
Over some precipice; let the hot sun  
Melt my Dedalian wings, and drive me down  
Convuls'd and headlong! Stay! an inward frown  
Of conscience bids me be more calm awhile. 305  
An ocean dim, sprinkled with many an isle,  
Spreads awfully before me. How much toil!  
How many days! what desperate turmoil!  
Ere I can have explored its widenesses.  
Ah, what a task! upon my bended knees, 310  
I could unsay those — no, impossible!  
Impossible!

For sweet relief I'll dwell  
On humbler thoughts, and let this strange assay  
Begun in gentleness die so away.



E'en now all tumult from my bosom fades : 315  
 I turn full hearted to the friendly aids  
 That smooth the path of honour ; brotherhood,  
 And friendliness the nurse of mutual good.  
 The hearty grasp that sends a pleasant sonnet  
 Into the brain ere one can think upon it ; 320  
 The silence when some rhymes are coming out ;  
 And when they're come, the very pleasant rout ;  
 The message certain to be done to-morrow.  
 'T is perhaps as well that it should be to borrow  
 Some precious book from out its snug retreat, 325  
 To cluster round it when we next shall meet.  
 Scarce can I scribble on ; for lovely airs  
 Are fluttering round the room like doves in pairs ;  
 Many delights of that glad day recalling,  
 When first my senses caught their tender falling. 330  
 And with these airs come forms of elegance  
 Stooping their shoulders o'er a horse's prance,  
 Careless, and grand — fingers soft and round  
 Parting luxuriant curls ; — and the swift bound  
 Of Bacchus from his chariot, when his eye 335  
 Made Ariadne's cheek look blushingly.  
 Thus I remember all the pleasant flow  
 Of words at opening a portfolio.



*SLEEP AND POETRY.*

61

Of pleasure's temple. Round about were hung 355  
The glorious features of the bards who sung  
In other ages — cold and sacred busts  
Smiled at each other. Happy he who trusts  
To clear Futurity his darling fame!  
Then there were fauns and satyrs taking aim 360  
At swelling apples with a frisky leap  
And reaching fingers, 'mid a luscious heap  
Of vine-leaves. Then there rose to view a fane  
Of liny marble, and thereto a train  
Of nymphs approaching fairly o'er the sward: 365  
One, loveliest, holding her white hand toward  
The dazzling sun-rise: two sisters sweet  
Bending their graceful figures till they meet  
Over the trippings of a little child:  
And some are hearing, eagerly, the wild 370  
Thrilling liquidity of dewy piping.  
See, in another picture, nymphs are wiping  
Cherishingly Diana's timorous limbs; —  
A fold of lawnly mantle dabbling swims  
At the bath's edge, and keeps a gentle motion 375  
With the subsiding crystal: as when ocean  
Heaves calmly its broad swelling smoothness o'er  
Its rocky marge, and balances once more  
The patient weeds; that now unshent by foam  
Feel all about their undulating home. 380

Sappho's meek head was there half smiling down  
At nothing; just as though the earnest frown  
Of over thinking had that moment gone  
From off her brow, and left her all alone.

Great Alfred's too, with anxious, pitying eyes, 385  
As if he always listened to the sighs  
Of the goaded world; and Kosciusko's worn  
By horrid suffrance — mightily forlorn.

Petrarch, outstepping from the shady green,  
Starts at the sight of Laura; nor can wean 390

---

Shelley wrote to Mrs. Gisborne. In Hunt's Correspondence (Volume i, page 289) we read "Keats's *Sleep and Poetry* is a description of a parlour that was mine, no bigger than an old mansion's closet." Clarke says (*Gentleman's Magazine*, February 1874) "It was in the library at Hunt's cottage, where an extemporary bed had been made up for him on the sofa."

His eyes from her sweet face. Most happy they!  
For over them was seen a free display  
Of out-spread wings, and from between them shone  
The face of Poesy: from off her throne  
She overlook'd things that I scarce could tell. 395  
The very sense of where I was might well  
Keep Sleep aloof: but more than that there came  
Thought after thought to nourish up the flame  
Within my breast; so that the morning light  
Surprised me even from a sleepless night; 400  
And up I rose refresh'd, and glad, and gay,  
Resolving to begin that very day  
These lines; and howsoever they be done,  
I leave them as a father does his son.



E N D Y M I O N :

A Poetic Romance.

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BY JOHN KEATS.


---

“THE STRETCHED METRE OF AN ANTIQUE SONG.”

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LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND HESSEY,  
93, FLEET STREET.  
1818.





[In Woodhouse's copy of *Endymion* there is a note against the passage "so I will begin" &c., line 39, Book I, to the effect that the poem was begun in the spring of 1817 and finished in the winter of 1817-18; and in the title-page he has inserted *April* before 1818. The statement corresponds with Keats's own record of May 1817, that he was busying himself at Margate with the commencement of *Endymion*. This reference cannot of course be to the same *Endymion* that he expected to finish in one more attack when he wrote to Clarke in December 1816. Probably the conception referred to by Lord Houghton (Aldine edition, page xvii) as "long germinating in his fancy" really took bodily form and substance, and that substance was wholly rejected, when Keats came within the radius of Haydon's heroic art propaganda, for the design on an ambitious scale which the next Spring was to see in print. Woodhouse records that at the end of the first draft is written "Burford Bridge, Nov. 28, 1817." His statement as to the month of issue scarcely does more than confirm the record of the series of documents bearing on this point published by Lord Houghton. Thus, the first book was in the publisher's hands by January 1818, and the last was copied out by the 14th of March; the original Preface, rejected upon the unfavourable verdict of Reynolds and others of Keats's friends, is dated the 19th of March; the Preface as published is dated the 10th of April, and went, it seems, in a letter to Reynolds of that date; and on the 27th of April Keats wrote to Taylor apologizing for giving him "all the trouble" of *Endymion*, and adding, apparently in allusion to that poem, "The book pleased me much. It is very free from faults; and, although there are one or two words I should wish replaced, I see in many places an improvement greatly to the purpose." The measure of Keats's fluency in composition may be judged by observing the alterations recorded in Book I in the following pages. Of that Book there appears to have been but one manuscript, written on sheets of quarto foolscap paper, and considerably altered before going to press. The other three Books were written into a blank book and afterwards copied on quarto foolscap uniform with that used for Book I. Hence the printer's copy (the quarto manuscript) shows much more revision in Book I than elsewhere. With that manuscript I have collated the printed text throughout; but the variations given in Book II, III, and IV as from the draft, I have taken from Woodhouse's manuscript annotations. The original edition

of *Endymion* is a handsome octavo volume, originally issued in thick drab boards labelled at back, *Keats's Endymion. Lond. 1818*, and consisting of fly-title as here reproduced, but with imprint at foot of verso, "*Printed by T. Miller, Noble street, Cheapside,*" title-page (with its motto adapted from Shakespeare's seventeenth Sonnet), and dedication to Chatterton's memory, as given opposite, Preface pages vii to ix, an erratum leaf with sometimes one and sometimes five errata printed on recto, and 207 pages of text including the fly-titles to the four books as given in the present edition. The head-line throughout is *Endymion* in Roman small capitals, the number of the Book being indicated in smaller letters at the inner corners, and the pages in Arabic figures as usual at the outer corners. The full page consists of 22 lines; and the lines are numbered in tens in the margin; not every ten lines of verse, but every ten lines of print, so that when a fresh paragraph begins with a portion of a verse, that particular verse counts for two lines. In numbering the lines in fives I have of course counted by lines of verse. — H. B. F.]

## PREFACE.

KNOWING within myself the manner in which this Poem has been produced, it is not without a feeling of regret that I make it public.

What manner I mean, will be quite clear to the reader, who must soon perceive great inexperience, immaturity, and every error denoting a feverish attempt, rather than a deed accomplished. The two first books, and indeed the two last, I feel sensible are not of such completion as to warrant their passing the press; nor should they if I thought a year's castigation would do them any good; — it will not: the foundations are too sandy. It is just that this youngster should die away: a sad thought for me, if I had not some hope that while it is dwindling I may be plotting, and fitting myself for verses fit to live.

This may be speaking too presumptuously, and may deserve a punishment: but no feeling man will be forward to inflict it: he will leave me alone, with the conviction that there is not a fiercer hell than the failure in a great object. This is not written with the least atom of purpose to forestall criticisms of course, but from the desire I have to conciliate men who are competent to look, and who do look with a zealous eye, to the honor of English literature.

The imagination of a boy is healthy, and the mature imagination of a man is healthy; but there is a space of life between, in which the soul is in a ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick-sighted: thence proceeds mawkishness, and all the thousand bitters which those men I speak of must necessarily taste in going over the following pages.

I hope I have not in too late a day touched the beautiful mythology of Greece, and dulled its brightness: for I wish to try once more,<sup>1</sup> before I bid it farewell.

TEIGNMOUTH, April 10, 1818.

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<sup>1</sup> Woodhouse notes — "This alluded to his then intention of writing a poem on the fall of Hyperion. He commenced this poem: but, thanks to the critics who fell foul of *this* work, he discontinued it. The fragment was published in 1820."



ORIGINAL PREFACE, &c., REJECTED IN FAVOUR OF  
THE FOREGOING.<sup>1</sup>

IN a great nation, the work of an individual is of so little importance; his pleadings and excuses are so uninteresting; his "way of life" such a nothing, that a Preface seems a sort of impertinent bow to strangers who care nothing about it.

A Preface, however, should be down in so many words; and such a one that by an eye-glance over the type the Reader may catch an idea of an Author's modesty, and non-opinion of himself — which I sincerely hope may be seen in the few lines I have to write, notwithstanding many proverbs of many ages old which men find a great pleasure in receiving as gospel.

About a twelvemonth since, I published a little book of verses; it was read by some dozen of my friends who lik'd it; and some dozen whom I was unacquainted with, who did not.

Now, when a dozen human beings are at words with another dozen, it becomes a matter of anxiety to side with one's friends — more especially when excited thereto by a great love of Poetry. I fought under disadvantages. Before I began I had no inward feel of being

chime bring upon their begetters — but this is not fair to expect, there must be conversation of some sort and to object shows a man's consequence. In case of a London drizzle or a Scotch mist, the following quotation from Marston may perhaps 'stead me as an umbrella for an hour or so: "let it be the curtesy of my peruser rather to pity my self-hindering labours than to malice me."

One word more — for we cannot help seeing our own affairs in every point of view — should any one call my dedication to Chatterton affected I answer as followeth: "Were I dead, sir, I should like a Book dedicated to me."

TEIGNMOUTH,  
*March 19th, 1818.*

[*Title-Page.*]

## ENDYMION.

A ROMANCE.

By JOHN KEATS.

"The stretched metre of an antique song."

*Shakspeare's Sonnets.*

---

INSCRIBED,

WITH EVERY FEELING OF PRIDE AND REGRET

AND WITH "A BOWED MIND,"

TO THE MEMORY OF

THE MOST ENGLISH OF POETS EXCEPT SHAKSPEARE,

THOMAS CHATTERTON.

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# ENDYMION.

## BOOK I.

A THING of beauty is a joy for ever :  
Its loveliness increases ; it will never  
Pass into nothingness ; but still will keep  
A bower quiet for us, and a sleep  
Full of sweet dreams, and health, and quiet breathing. 5  
Therefore, on every morrow, are we wreathing  
A flowery band to bind us to the earth,  
Spite of despondence, of the inhuman dearth  
Of noble natures, of the gloomy days,  
Of all the unhealthy and o'er-darkened ways 10  
Made for our searching : yes, in spite of all,  
Some shape of beauty moves away the pall  
From our dark spirits. Such the sun, the moon,  
Trees old, and young, sprouting a shady boon  
For simple sheep ; and such are daffodils 15  
With the green world they live in ; and clear rills

(1) The manuscript shows no variation in this renowned opening line ; but Dr. B. W. Richardson tells me that his friend the late Mr. Henry Stephens of Finchley, who was a fellow student in medicine with Keats, and lived in the same rooms with him for a time, preserved the recollection of an earlier opening line. Keats is said to have written the line, presumably in some rough draft of his intended opening, thus—

A thing of beauty is a constant joy :

the tradition is that his friend, on hearing this, pronounced the opening line "a fine line, but wanting something," and that Keats pondered it over, and at length broke out with an inspired "I have it," and set down the household word that now stands at the head of the poem.

(9) In the manuscript, *ways* stands altered to *days*.

(13) Instead of line 13 there were originally three lines in the manuscript :

From our dark Spirits, and before us dances

Like glitter on the points of Arthur's Lances.

Of these bright powers are the Sun and Moon..

But before the manuscript went to press Keats's keen perception of fitness rejected the medieval allusion, and supplied the reading of the text.

(15) In the manuscript,

of these are daffodils

And the green world, &c.

That for themselves a cooling covert make  
'Gainst the hot season; the mid forest brake,  
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:  
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms 20  
We have imagined for the mighty dead;  
All lovely tales that we have heard or read:  
An endless fountain of immortal drink,  
Pouring unto us from the heaven's brink.

Nor do we merely feel these essences 25  
For one short hour; no, even as the trees  
That whisper round a temple become soon  
Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,  
The passion poesy, glories infinite,  
Haunt us till they become a cheering light 30  
Unto our souls, and bound to us so fast,  
That, whether there be shine, or gloom o'ercast,  
They alway must be with us, or we die.

Therefore, 'tis with full happiness that I  
Will trace the story of Endymion. 35  
The very music of the name has gone  
Into my being, and each pleasant scene  
Is growing fresh before me as the green

Before the daisies, vermeil rimm'd and white, 50  
 Hide in deep herbage; and ere yet the bees  
 Hum about globes of clover and sweet peas,  
 I must be near the middle of my story.  
 O may no wintry season, bare and hoary,  
 See it half finish'd: but let Autumn bold, 55  
 With universal tinge of sober gold,  
 Be all about me when I make an end.  
 And now at once, adventuresome, I send  
 My herald thought into a wilderness:  
 There let its trumpet blow, and quickly dress 60  
 My uncertain path with green, that I may speed  
 Easily onward, thorough flowers and weed.

Upon the sides of Latmus was outspread  
 A mighty forest; for the moist earth fed  
 So plenteously all weed-hidden roots 65  
 Into o'er-hanging boughs, and precious fruits.  
 And it had gloomy shades, sequestered deep,  
 Where no man went; and if from shepherd's keep  
 A lamb stray'd far a-down those inmost glens,  
 Never again saw he the happy pens 70  
 Whither his brethren, bleating with content,  
 Over the hills at every nightfall went.  
 Among the shepherds, 't was believed ever,  
 That not one fleecy lamb which thus did sever  
 From the white flock, but pass'd unworried 75  
 By angry wolf, or pard with prying head,  
 Until it came to some unfooted plains  
 Where fed the herds of Pan: aye great his gains  
 Who thus one lamb did lose. Paths there were many,  
 Winding through palmy fern, and rushes fenny, 80  
 And ivy banks; all leading pleasantly  
 To a wide lawn, whence one could only see

(50) Keats originally wrote this word *vermil* both here and in line 696 of this Book. Whether he adopted it from Spenser or some other writer I know not; but in Spenser it is *vermell*: see *Faerie Queene*, Book II, Canto X, stanza 24.

(58) In the manuscript there is a comma after *now* and none after *adventuresome*.

(71) The manuscript reads *To which* for *Whither*.

(74) In the manuscript, *fleecy* is altered to *fleeceing*, which, in turn, is altered back to *fleecy*.

(78) In the manuscript,

aye great his gains

Who thus but one did lose.

The reading of the text is supplied, as an alternative, in pencil. In the first edition *ay* is printed for *aye*.

Stems thronging all around between the swell  
 Of turf and slanting branches : who could tell  
 The freshness of the space of heaven above, 85  
 Edg'd round with dark tree tops? through which a dove  
 Would often beat its wings, and often too  
 A little cloud would move across the blue.

Full in the middle of this pleasantness  
 There stood a marble altar, with a tress 90  
 Of flowers budded newly ; and the dew  
 Had taken fairy phantasies to strew  
 Daisies upon the sacred sward last eve,  
 And so the dawned light in pomp receive.  
 For 't was the morn : Apollo's upward fire 95  
 Made every eastern cloud a silvery pyre  
 Of brightness so unsully'd, that therein  
 A melancholy spirit well might win  
 Oblivion, and melt out his essence fine 100  
 Into the winds : rain-scented eglantine  
 Gave temperate sweets to that well-wooing sun ;  
 The lark was lost in him ; cold springs had run  
 To warm their chilliest bubbles in the grass ;  
 Man's voice was on the mountains ; and the mass  
 Of nature's lives and wonders puls'd tenfold, 105

Fill'd out its voice, and di'd away again.  
 Within a little space again it gave  
 Its airy swellings, with a gentle wave,  
 To light-hung leaves, in smoothest echoes breaking  
 Through copse-clad vallies, — ere their death, o'ertaking 120  
 The surgy murmurs of the lonely sea.

And now, as deep into the wood as we  
 Might mark a lynx's eye, there glimmered light  
 Fair faces and a rush of garments white,  
 Plainer and plainer showing, till at last 125  
 Into the widest alley they all past,  
 Making directly for the woodland altar.  
 O kindly muse ! let not my weak tongue falter  
 In telling of this goodly company,  
 Of their old piety, and of their glee : 130  
 But let a portion of ethereal dew  
 Fall on my head, and presently unmew  
 My soul ; that I may dare, in wayfaring,  
 To stammer where old Chaucer us'd to sing.

Leading the way, young damsels danced along, 135  
 Bearing the burden of a shepherd song ;  
 Each having a white wicker over brimm'd  
 With April's tender younglings : next, well trimm'd,

(119) Cancelled manuscript reading, *and for in.*

(125) The manuscript has *showing*, Keats's usual orthography, the first edition *showing*.

(128) In the manuscript Keats had cancelled the whole of this invocation, sacrificing with it the lovely line 127 ; but the passage was finally restored by means of a pencilled *Stet.*

(132) The word *unmew*, in the sense of enfranchise, may probably be a relic of Shakespearean study. Compare *Romeo and Juliet*, Act III, Scene IV, line 11 —

To-night she is mew'd up to her heaviness.

(135) This and the next two lines exercised the poet's fastidious taste greatly. They stood originally thus :

In front some pretty Damsels danced along,  
 Bearing the Burden of a shepherd Song ;  
 And each with handy wicker over brimmed..

and even then he had begun to write *may day Song* instead of *shepherd Song*. Then there is an intermediate reading for line 135, before that of the text is supplied —

And in the front young Damsels danced along,  
 while two rejected marginal readings for line 137 are —  
 Each bringing a white wicker over brimmed  
 and  
 Each brought a little wicker over brimmed.



A crowd of shepherds with as sunburnt looks  
 As may be read of in Arcadian books ; 140  
 Such as sat listening round Apollo's pipe,  
 When the great deity, for earth too ripe,  
 Let his divinity o'er-flowing die  
 In music, through the vales of Thessaly :  
 Some idly trail'd their sheep-hooks on the ground, 145  
 And some kept up a shrilly mellow sound  
 With ebon-tipped flutes : close after these,  
 Now coming from beneath the forest trees,  
 A venerable priest full soberly,  
 Begirt with ministring looks : alway his eye 150  
 Stedfast upon the matted turf he kept,  
 And after him his sacred vestments swept.  
 From his right hand there swung a vase, milk-white,  
 Of mingled wine, out-sparkling generous light ;  
 And in his left he held a basket full 155  
 Of all sweet herbs that searching eye could cull :  
 Wild thyme, and valley-lillies whiter still  
 Than Leda's love, and cresses from the rill.  
 His aged head, crowned with beechen wreath,  
 Seem'd like a poll of ivy in the teeth 160  
 Of winter hoar. Then came another crowd  
 Of shepherds, lifting in due time aloud

Up-followed by a multitude that rear'd  
 Their voices to the clouds, a fair wrought car, 165  
 Easily rolling so as scarce to mar  
 The freedom of three steeds of dapple brown :  
 Who stood therein did seem of great renown  
 Among the throng. His youth was fully blown,  
 Showing like Ganymede to manhood grown ; 170  
 And, for those simple times, his garments were  
 A chieftain king's : beneath his breast, half bare,  
 Was hung a silver bugle, and between  
 His nervy knees there lay a boar-spear keen.  
 A smile was on his countenance ; he seem'd, 175  
 To common lookers on, like one who dream'd  
 Of idleness in groves Elysian :  
 But there were some who feelingly could scan  
 A lurking trouble in his nether lip,  
 And see that oftentimes the reins would slip 180  
 Through his forgotten hands : then would they sigh,  
 And think of yellow leaves, of owlets' cry,  
 Of logs pil'd solemnly. — Ah, well-a-day,  
 Why should our young Endymion pine away !

Soon the assembly, in a circle rang'd, 185  
 Stood silent round the shrine : each look was chang'd  
 To sudden veneration : women meek  
 Beckon'd their sons to silence ; while each cheek  
 Of virgin bloom pal'd gently for slight fear.  
 Endymion too, without a forest peer, 190  
 Stood, wan, and pale, and with an awed face,  
 Among his brothers of the mountain chace.  
 In midst of all, the venerable priest  
 Ey'd them with joy from greatest to the least,  
 And, after lifting up his aged hands, 195  
 Thus spake he : “ Men of Latmos ! shepherd bands !  
 Whose care it is to guard a thousand flocks :  
 Whether descended from beneath the rocks  
 That overtop your mountains ; whether come  
 From vallies where the pipe is never dumb ; 200  
 Or from your swelling downs, where sweet air stirs

(168) In the manuscript, *sat* is here cancelled in favour of *stood*.(170) In the first edition *Shewing*.(191) Cancelled manuscript reading, *a bowed face* for *an awed face*.(192) In the first edition *chase* here, though *chace* in line 532 of the same Book. The manuscript gives *chace* in both instances, as at page 24 of the present volume.

Blue hare-bells lightly, and where prickly furze  
 Buds lavish gold; or ye, whose precious charge  
 Nibble their fill at ocean's very marge,  
 Whose mellow reeds are touch'd with sounds forlorn 205  
 By the dim echoes of old Triton's horn:  
 Mothers and wives! who day by day prepare  
 The scrip, with needments, for the mountain air;  
 And all ye gentle girls who foster up  
 Udderless lambs, and in a little cup 210  
 Will put choice honey for a favoured youth:  
 Yea, every one attend! for in good truth  
 Our vows are wanting to our great god Pan.  
 Are not our lowing heifers sleeker than  
 Night-swollen mushrooms? Are not our wide plains 215  
 Speckled with countless fleeces? Have not rains  
 Green'd over April's lap? No howling sad  
 Sickens our fearful ewes; and we have had  
 Great bounty from Endymion our lord.  
 The earth is glad: the merry lark has pour'd 220  
 His early song against yon breezy sky,  
 That spreads so clear o'er our solemnity."

Thus ending, on the shrine he heap'd a spire  
 Of teeming sweets, and kindling sacred fire:

'Neath smothering parsley, and a hazy light  
Spread greily eastward, thus a chorus sang: 230

“ O THOU, whose mighty palace roof doth hang  
From jagged trunks, and overshadoweth  
Eternal whispers, glooms, the birth, life, death  
Of unseen flowers in heavy peacefulness; 235  
Who lov'st to see the hamadryads dress

Their ruffled locks where meeting hazels darken;  
And through whole solemn hours dost sit, and hearken  
The dreary melody of bedded reeds —  
In desolate places, where dank moisture breeds 240

The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth;  
Bethinking thee, how melancholy loth  
Thou wast to lose fair Syrinx — do thou now,  
By thy love's milky brow!  
By all the trembling mazes that she ran, 245  
Hear us, great Pan!

“ O thou, for whose soul-soothing quiet, turtles  
Passion their voices cooingly 'mong myrtles.

(232) It was the Hymn to Pan beginning here that the young poet when engaged in the composition of *Endymion* was induced to recite in the presence of Wordsworth, on the 28th of December 1817, at Haydon's house. Leigh Hunt records that the elder poet pronounced it “ a very pretty piece of paganism,” though his own magnificent sonnet,

The world is too much with us,

shows that he was not always in a mood to contemn the poetic-imaginative aspects of nature open to “ a Pagan suckled in a creed outworn.” It is worth while to note in this connexion the coincidence between the couplet in the text, lines 205-6, and the end of that sonnet:

So might I, standing on this pleasant lea,  
Have glimpses that would make me less forlorn;  
Have sight of Proteus rising from the sea;  
Or hear old Triton blow his wreathed horn.

(246) Cancelled manuscript reading —

Listen great Pan!

The beautiful tale of Syrinx seems to have entered into Keats's soul, and not unnaturally. Compare this with the tender passage,

Telling us how fair, trembling Syrinx fled  
Arcadian Pan,

and so on (page 7 of the present volume), and above all with the exquisite couplet

Like the low voice of Syrinx, when she ran  
Into the forests from Arcadian Pan

in the rejected passage of Book II, which was published in *The Indicator*. See note after line 853, Book II.

(248) The verb to passion is another of the words which the “ noteless blot ” in

What time thou wanderest at eventide  
 Through sunny meadows, that outskirts the side 250  
 Of thine enmossed realms : O thou, to whom  
 Broad leaved fig trees even now foredoom  
 Their ripen'd fruitage ; yellow girted bees  
 Their golden honeycombs ; our village leas  
 Their fairest blossom'd beans and popped corn ; 255  
 The chuckling linnnet its five young unborn,  
 To sing for thee ; low creeping strawberries  
 Their summer coolness ; pent up butterflies  
 Their freckled wings ; yea, the fresh budding year  
 All its completions — be quickly near, 260  
 By every wind that nods the mountain pine,  
 O forester divine !

" Thou, to whom every faun and satyr flies  
 For willing service ; whether to surprise  
 The squatted hare while in half sleeping fit ; 265  
 Or upward ragged precipices flit  
 To save poor lambkins from the eagle's maw ;  
 Or by mysterious enticement draw  
 Bewildered shepherds to their path again ;  
 Or to tread breathless round the frothy main, 270

The while they pelt each other on the crown  
 With silvery oak apples, and fir cones brown —  
 By all the echoes that about thee ring,  
 Hear us, O satyr king !

“ O Harkener to the loud clapping shears,  
 While ever and anon to his shorn peers  
 A ram goes bleating: Winder of the horn,  
 When snouted wild boars routing tender corn  
 Anger our huntsmen: Breather round our farms,  
 To keep off mildews, and all weather harms:  
 Strange ministrant of undescribed sounds,  
 That come a swooning over hollow grounds,  
 And wither drearily on barren moors:  
 Dread opener of the mysterious doors  
 Leading to universal knowledge — see,  
 Great son of Dryope,  
 The many that are come to pay their vows  
 With leaves about their brows !

“ Be still the unimaginable lodge  
 For solitary thinkings; such as dodge,  
 Conception to the very bourne of heaven,  
 Then leave the naked brain: be still the leaven,  
 That spreading in this dull and clodded earth  
 Gives it a touch ethereal — a new birth:  
 Be still a symbol of immensity;  
 A firmament reflected in a sea;  
 An element filling the space between;  
 An unknown — but no more: we humbly screen  
 With uplift hands our foreheads, lowly bending,  
 And giving out a shout most heaven rending,  
 Conjure thee to receive our humble Pæan.  
 Upon thy Mount Lycean !”

Even while they brought the burden to a close,  
 A shout from the whole multitude arose,

(283) The manuscript reads *Huntsmen*, the first edition *hunter*; but it is most unlikely that Keats made this slight change in a wrong direction.

(290) Of the various parentages assigned to Pan by the ancients Keats seems to have preferred the Homeric.

(293) The quotation-marks here and at the close of the hymn are not in the first edition, nor in the manuscript; but they are in the corrected copy.

(307) The contraction *E'en* is in the manuscript; but the first edition reads *Even*.

That lingered in the air like dying rolls  
Of abrupt thunder, when Ionian shoals 310  
Of dolphins bob their noses through the brine.  
Meantime, on shady levels, mossy fine,  
Young companies nimbly began dancing  
To the swift treble pipe, and humming string.  
Aye, those fair living forms swam heavenly 315  
To tunes forgotten — out of memory:  
Fair creatures! whose young childrens' children bred  
Thermopylæ its heroes — not yet dead,  
But in old marbles ever beautiful.  
High genitors, unconscious did they cull 320  
Time's sweet first-fruits — they danc'd to weariness,  
And then in quiet circles did they press  
The hillock turf, and caught the latter end  
Of some strange history, potent to send  
A young mind from its bodily tenement 325  
Or they might watch the quoit-pitchers, intent  
On either side; pitying the sad death  
Of Hyacinthus, when the cruel breath  
Of Zephyr slew him, — Zephyr penitent,  
Who now, ere Phæbus mounts the firmament, 330  
Fondles the flower amid the sobbing rain.  
The archers too, upon a wider plain,

Were dead and gone, and her caressing tongue 340  
 Lay a lost thing upon her paly lip,  
 And very, very deadliness did nip  
 Her motherly cheeks. Arous'd from this sad mood  
 By one, who at a distance loud halloo'd,  
 Uplifting his strong bow into the air, 345  
 Many might after brighter visions stare :  
 After the Argonauts, in blind amaze  
 Tossing about on Neptune's restless ways,  
 Until, from the horizon's vaulted side,  
 There shot a golden splendour far and wide, 350  
 Spangling those million poutings of the brine  
 With quivering ore : 't was even an awful shine  
 From the exaltation of Apollo's bow ;  
 A heavenly beacon in their dreary woe.  
 Who thus were ripe for high contemplating, 355  
 Might turn their steps towards the sober ring  
 Where sat Endymion and the aged priest  
 'Mong shepherds gone in eld, whose looks increas'd  
 The silvery setting of their mortal star.  
 There they discours'd upon the fragile bar 360  
 That keeps us from our homes ethereal ;  
 And what our duties there : to nightly call  
 Vesper, the beauty-crest of summer weather ;  
 To summon all the downiest clouds together

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(347) The reference here is to the passage from the second Book of the *Argonautica* of Apollonius Rhodius, beginning at verse 674 (τοιαῖ δὲ Ἀηροῦς υἱός, κ.τ.λ.), which Shelley had in mind when (Prose Works, Volume III, page 56) he alluded to the Apollo "so finely described by Apollonius Rhodius when the dazzling radiance of his beautiful limbs suddenly shone over the dark Euxine."

Right glorious before their wondering sight  
 Appeared the child of Leto, travelling swift  
 From Libya northwards to the boundless realms  
 Of men that dwell beyond the northern wind.  
 The bright curls clustered round about his cheeks  
 Like streaming gold : he bore a silver bow  
 In his left hand, and o'er his shoulder slung  
 A quiver : and beneath his feet divine  
 The island trembled, and great waves came up  
 Out of the sea and broke upon the shore.

The passage has been kindly rendered for me as above by Mr. R. C. Day, who has thus saved me the necessity of giving it in prose or in the stiff and not very accurate rendering of Green or one of the still poorer translators of Apollonius Rhodius.

(352) In Keats's edition *even* is here printed in full ; but in the manuscript it is contracted to *e'en*.



For the sun's purple couch ; to emulate 365  
 In ministring the potent rule of fate  
 With speed of fire-tail'd exhalations ;  
 To tint her pallid cheek with bloom, who cons  
 Sweet poesy by moonlight : besides these,  
 A world of other unguess'd offices. 370  
 Anon they wander'd, by divine converse,  
 Into Elysium ; vicing to rehearse  
 Each one his own anticipated bliss.  
 One felt heart-certain that he could not miss  
 His quick gone love, among fair blossom'd boughs, 375  
 Where every zephyr-sigh pouts, and endows  
 Her lips with music for the welcoming.  
 Another wish'd, mid that eternal spring,  
 To meet his rosy child, with feathery sails,  
 Sweeping, eye-earnestly, through almond vales : 380  
 Who, suddenly, should stoop through the smooth wind,  
 And with the balmiest leaves his temples bind ;  
 And, ever after, through those regions be  
 His messenger, his little Mercury.  
 Some were athirst in soul to see again 385  
 Their fellow huntsmen o'er the wide champaign  
 In times long past ; to sit with them, and talk  
 Of all the chances in their earthly walk ;

Aye, even as dead-still as a marble man,  
Frozen in that old tale Arabian. 405

Who whispers him so pantingly and close?  
Peona, his sweet sister: of all those,  
His friends, the dearest. Hushing signs she made,  
And breath'd a sister's sorrow to persuade 410  
A yielding up, a cradling on her care.  
Her eloquence did breathe away the curse:  
She led him, like some midnight spirit nurse  
Of happy changes in emphatic dreams,  
Along a path between two little streams, — 415  
Guarding his forehead, with her round elbow,  
From low-grown branches, and his footsteps slow  
From stumbling over stumps and hillocks small;  
Until they came to where these steamlets fall,  
With mingled bubblings and a gentle rush, 420  
Into a river, clear, brimful, and flush  
With crystal mocking of the trees and sky.  
A little shallop, floating there hard by,

---

(405-6) There are several episodes in *The Thousand and One Nights* that might possibly be cited in connexion with this couplet; but there can hardly be any reasonable doubt that the allusion is to the tale generally associated with the name of Zobeide, its narrator, — that is to say the Eldest Lady's Story in *The Porter and the Three Ladies of Baghdad*. Although the story is almost too well known for an extract to be needed, English scholars have yet to desire a version of *The Thousand and One Nights* at once complete, scholarly, and characteristic in language. No apology is therefore necessary for inserting the following extract from a version on a sumptuous scale, by Mr. John Payne, now mainly in manuscript, but in course of private issue by subscription:

"We sailed days and nights, till the captain missed the true course and the ship went astray with us and entered a sea other than that we aimed at. We knew not of this awhile and the wind blew fair for us ten days, at the end of which time the look-out man ascended to the mast-head to look out and cried 'Good news!' Then he came down, rejoicing, and said 'I see a city afar off, as it were a dove.' At this we rejoiced, and before an hour of the day was past, the city appeared to us in the distance. So we said to the captain 'What is the name of the city to which we are drawing near?' 'By Allah,' replied he, 'I know not, for I have never before seen it, nor have I ever sailed this sea in my life! But, since the affair has ended in safety, nought remains for you but to land and display your goods, and if an opportunity offer sell or barter as may be; but if the occasion serve not, we will rest here two days, then re-victual and depart.' So we entered the harbour and the captain landed and was absent awhile, after which he returned to us and said 'Arise go up into the city and marvel at God's dealings with His creatures and seek refuge from His wrath.' So we went up to the city and saw at the gate men with staves in their hands; but when we drew near them, behold, they had been stricken by the wrath of God and were become stones! Then we entered and found all the town-folk changed into black stones; there was not a live soul left therein, no, not a blower of the fire. At this we were confounded and traversed the streets and markets, where we found the merchandise and gold and silver exposed in their places, and rejoiced saying 'Doubtless, there is some mystery in this.' Then we

Pointed its beak over the fringed bank ;  
 And soon it lightly dipt, and rose, and sank, 425  
 And dipt again, with the young couple's weight, —  
 Peona guiding, through the water straight,  
 Towards a bowery island opposite ;  
 Which gaining presently, she steered light  
 Into a shady, fresh, and ripply cove, 430  
 Where nested was an arbour, overwove  
 By many a summer's silent fingering ;  
 To whose cool bosom she was us'd to bring  
 Her playmates, with their needle broidery,  
 And minstrel memories of times gone by. 435

So she was gently glad to see him laid  
 Under her favourite bower's quiet shade,

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all dispersed about the streets of the city, distracted each from his fellow by the lust of gain and the stuffs and riches ; whilst I went up to the citadel and found it rare and skilful in fashion. I entered the king's palace, where I found all the vessels of gold and silver and saw the king himself seated in the midst of his chamberlains and lieutenants and viziers, and clad in raiment that amazed the wit. As I drew near him, I saw that he was seated on a throne inlaid with pearls and jewels, and arrayed in a robe of cloth of gold embroidered with jewels, each one of which shone like a star, whilst there stood about him fifty white slaves, dressed in various kinds of silks and bearing drawn swords in their hands. I was struck with amazement at the sight, but went on and entered the saloon of the harem, whose walls were covered with hangings of silk, striped with gold. Here I found the queen

On her own couch, new made of flower leaves,  
 Dry'd carefully on the cooler side of sheaves  
 When last the sun his autumn tresses shook, 440  
 And the tann'd harvesters rich armfuls took.  
 Soon was he quieted to slumbrous rest :  
 But, ere it crept upon him, he had prest  
 Peona's busy hand against his lips,  
 And still, a sleeping, held her finger-tips 445  
 In tender pressure. And as a willow keeps  
 A patient watch over the stream that creeps  
 Windingly by it, so the quiet maid  
 Held her in peace : so that a whispering blade  
 Of grass, a wailful gnat, a bee bustling 450  
 Down in the blue-bells, or a wren light rustling  
 Among sere leaves and twigs, might all be heard.

O magic sleep ! O comfortable bird,  
 That broodest o'er the troubled sea of the mind  
 Till it is hush'd and smooth ! O unconfin'd 455  
 Restraint ! imprisoned liberty ! great key  
 To golden palaces, strange minstrelsy,

(440) Keats has here sacrificed, no doubt properly, a very pretty picture, consisting of eleven lines struck out of the manuscript. The whole passage originally stood thus :

On her own couch, new made of flower leaves,  
 Dry'd carefully on the cooler side of sheaves  
 When last the Harvesters rich armfuls took.  
 She tied a little bucket to a Crook,  
 Ran some swift paces to a dark wells side,  
 And in a sighing-time return'd, supplied  
 With spar cold water ; in which she did squeeze  
 A snowy napkin, and upon her knees  
 Began to cherish her poor Brother's face ;  
 Damping refreshfully his forehead's space,  
 His eyes, his Lips : then in a cupped shell  
 She brought him ruby wine ; then let him smell,  
 Time after time, a precious amulet,  
 Which seldom took she from its cabinet.  
 Thus was he quieted to slumbrous rest :

In supplying the couplet that now stands for this cancelled passage, Keats altered the initial *And* of line 441 to *While*, and back again to *And*.

(450-1) The manuscript corresponds with the printed text in regard to this couplet ; but the *or* in line 451 was an afterthought. Perhaps Keats meant to remedy in the same way line 450, and read *or a bee bustling* ; but the roughness of metre may have been intentional. The licence of framing a couplet so that a rhyming dissyllable must be accentuated on the second syllable in one line and on the first in the other should have been intolerable to his exquisite and cultivated ear ; but this was of course no innovation of his : he must have met with it over and over again in his studies of earlier English poets.

(454) The manuscript reads *o' the mind* (or *of the mind*).

Fountains grotesque, new trees, bespangled caves,  
Echoing grottos, full of tumbling waves  
And moonlight; aye, to all the mazy world 460  
Of silvery enchantment! — who, upfurl'd  
Beneath thy drowsy wing a triple hour,  
But renovates and lives? — Thus, in the bower,  
Endymion was calm'd to life again.  
Opening his eyelids with a healthier brain, 465  
He said: “ I feel this thine endearing love  
All through my bosom: thou art as a dove  
Trembling its closed eyes and sleeked wings  
About me; and the pearliest dew not brings  
Such morning incense from the fields of May, 470  
As do those brighter drops that twinkling stray  
From those kind eyes, — the very home and haunt  
Of sisterly affection. Can I want  
Aught else, aught nearer heaven, than such tears?  
Yet dry them up, in bidding hence all fears 475  
That, any longer, I will pass my days  
Alone and sad. No, I will once more raise  
My voice upon the mountain-heights; once more  
Make my horn parley from their foreheads hoar:  
Again my trooping hounds their tongues shall loll 480  
Around the breathed boar: again I'll poll

And, if thy lute is here, softly intreat  
My soul to keep in its resolved course."

Hereat Peona, in their silver source,  
Shut her pure sorrow drops with glad exclaim, 490  
And took a lute, from which there pulsing came  
A lively prelude, fashioning the way  
In which her voice should wander. 'T was a lay  
More subtle cadenced, more forest wild  
Than Dryope's lone lulling of her child; 495  
And nothing since has floated in the air  
So mournful strange. Surely some influence rare  
Went, spiritual, through the damsel's hand;  
For still, with Delphic emphasis, she spann'd  
The quick invisible strings, even though she saw 500  
Endymion's spirit melt away and thaw  
Before the deep intoxication.

(494-5) This couplet is marginally substituted in the manuscript for the following six lines:

More forest-wild, more subtle-cadenced  
Than can be told by mortal: even wed  
The fainting tenors of a thousand shells  
To a million whisperings of Lilly bells;  
And mingle too the Nightingale's complain  
Caught in its hundredth echo; 't would be vain:...

Strikingly characteristic as this is of the ruling mood of Keats, one cannot regret the liberality of rejection which threw it aside for the incomparable reference to Pan's mother in the couplet of the text. It is just conceivable that the passage given in the foot-note to line 853 of Book II was a part of the original conception of this episode, but hardly probable.

(496) In the manuscript, this line begins with *For*, *And* being jotted as a suggestion in the margin.

(502) The use of this word *intoxication* as a full five-syllable word accented on the final syllable, and a similar use of many words terminating in *ion*, has been a topic of frequent censure with Keats's critics; but I presume no one at the present day needs to be told that this was merely another Elizabethan licence reproduced. Here is one of many instances from Shakespeare (*Romeo and Juliet*, Act III, Scene v, line 29):

Some say the lark makes sweet division,

and one from Spenser (*Faerie Queene*, Book III, Canto VIII, stanza 1):

Lo oft as I this history record  
My heart doth melt with meere compassion,  
To think how causelesse, of her owne accord,  
This gentle damzell whom I write upon,  
Should plonged be in such affliction...

Spenser, indeed, availed himself so often and so unsparingly of this facile way of rhyming and scanning that it may well have happened that Keats's ardent admiration for the elder poet led him to think even this a beauty to be imitated. Here are

But soon she came, with sudden burst, upon  
 Her self-possession — swung the lute aside,  
 And earnestly said: "Brother, 't is vain to hide 505  
 That thou dost know of things mysterious,  
 Immortal, starry; such alone could thus  
 Weigh down thy nature. Hast thou sinn'd in aught  
 Offensive to the heavenly powers? Caught \*  
 A Paphian dove upon a message sent? 510  
 Thy deathful bow against some deer-herd bent,  
 Sacred to Dian? Haply, thou hast seen  
 Her naked limbs among the alders green;  
 And that, alas! is death. No I can trace  
 Something more high perplexing in thy face!" 515

fourteen consecutive lines in *The Faerie Queene* (Book III, Canto VI, stanzas 8 and 9), which would be considered very deficient in executive invention nowadays:

Miraculous may seeme to him that reades  
 So straunge ensample of conception;  
 But reason teacheth that the fruitfull seades  
 Of all things living, through impression  
 Of the sunbeames in moyst complexion,  
 Doe life conceiue and quickned are by kynd:  
 So, after Nilus inundation,  
 Infinite shapcs of creatures men doe fynd  
 Informed in the mud on which the Sunne hath shynd.  
 Great father he of generation

- Endymion look'd at her, and press'd her hand,  
 And said, " Art thou so pale, who wast so bland  
 And merry in our meadows? How is this?  
 Tell me thine ailment: tell me all amiss! —  
 Ah! thou hast been unhappy at the change 520  
 Wrought suddenly in me. What indeed more strange?  
 Or more complete to overwhelm surmise?  
 Ambition is no sluggard: 't is no prize,  
 That toiling years would put within my grasp,  
 That I have sigh'd for: with so deadly gasp 525  
 No man e'er panted for a mortal love.  
 So all have set my heavier grief above  
 These things which happen. Rightly have they done:  
 I, who still saw the horizontal sun  
 Heave his broad shoulder o'er the edge of the world, 530  
 Out-facing Lucifer, and then had hurl'd  
 My spear aloft, as signal for the chace —  
 I, who, for very sport of heart, would race  
 With my own steed from Araby; pluck down  
 A vulture from his towery perching; frown 535  
 A lion into growling, loth retire —  
 To lose, at once, all my toil breeding fire,  
 And sink thus low! but I will ease my breast  
 Of secret grief, here in this bowery nest.
- " This river does not see the naked sky, 540  
 Till it begins to progress silverly  
 Around the western border of the wood,  
 Whence, from a certain spot, its winding flood  
 Seems at the distance like a crescent moon:  
 And in that nook, the very pride of June, 545

(530) In the manuscript we read *o' the world* for *of the world*. Compare Thomson, *Winter*, lines 780-1,

the horizontal sun,  
 Broad o'er the south, hangs at his utmost noon.

(531) The last of the stars to disappear before the rising sun. Ovid says (*Metamorphoses*, Book II, verses 114-15),

Diffugiunt stellæ; quarum agmina cogit  
 Lucifer, et coeli statione novissimus exit.

(536) In the manuscript, *grumbling* is cancelled for *growling*.

(539) This couplet is substituted in the manuscript for the erased couplet —

And come to such a Ghost as I am now!  
 But listen, Sister, I will tell the how.

Probably *she* was meant for *thee*; but perhaps not.

(545) Instead of this and the following line, the manuscript originally had six lines —



Had I been us'd to pass my weary eyes ;  
The rather for the sun unwilling leaves  
So dear a picture of his sovereign power,  
And I could witness his most kingly hour,  
When he doth tighten up the golded reins, 550  
And paces leisurely down amber plains  
His snorting four. Now when his chariot last  
Its beams against the zodiac-lion cast,  
There blossom'd suddenly a magic bed  
Of sacred ditamy, and poppies red : 555  
At which I wondered greatly, knowing well  
That but one night had wrought this flowery spell ;  
And, sitting down close by, began to muse  
What it might mean. Perhaps, thought I, Morpheus,  
In passing here, his owlet pinions shook ; 560  
Or, it may be, ere matron Night uptook  
Her ebon urn, young Mercury, by stealth,  
Had dipt his rod in it : such garland wealth  
Came not by common growth. Thus on I thought,  
Until my head was dizzy and distraught. 565  
Moreover, through the dancing poppies stole  
A breeze, most softly lulling to my soul ;  
And shaping visions all about my sight  
Of colours, wings, and bursts of spangly light ;

And then I fell asleep. Ah, can I tell  
 The enchantment that afterwards befel?  
 Yet it was but a dream: yet such a dream  
 That never tongue, although it overteem 575  
 With mellow utterance, like a cavern spring,  
 Could figure out and to conception bring  
 All I beheld and felt. Methought I lay  
 Watching the zenith, where the milky way  
 Among the stars in virgin splendour pours; 580  
 And travelling my eye, until the doors  
 Of heaven appear'd to open for my flight,  
 I became loth and fearful to alight  
 From such high soaring by a downward glance:  
 So kept me steadfast in that airy trance, 585  
 Spreading imaginary pinions wide.  
 When, presently, the stars began to glide,  
 And faint away, before my eager view:  
 At which I sigh'd that I could not pursue,  
 And dropt my vision to the horizon's verge;  
 And lo! from opening clouds, I saw emerge 590  
 The loveliest moon, that ever silver'd o'er  
 A shell for Neptune's goblet: she did soar  
 So passionately bright, my dazzled soul  
 Commingling with her argent spheres did roll 595  
 Through clear and cloudy, even when she went  
 At last into a dark and vapoury tent —  
 Whereat, methought, the lidless-eyed train  
 Of planets all were in the blue again.  
 To commune with those orbs, once more I rais'd 600  
 My sight right upward: but it was quite daz'd  
 By a bright something, sailing down apace,  
 Making me quickly veil my eyes and face:

(573) This line is given as in the manuscript and in Keats's edition. That its haltness was felt is perhaps indicated by the fact that something has been written over it in pencil and rubbed out again. I suppose we are to accentuate *enchantment* on the first syllable.

(582) Cancelled manuscript reading *seemed* for *appear'd*.

(596) Compare Thomson's *Seasons, Spring*, line 332,

From clear to cloudy tossed.

(599) Cancelled manuscript reading, *were all*, for *all were*.

(600-1) This couplet stood thus in the manuscript originally —

And to commune with them once more I rais'd  
 My eyes right upward: but they were quite dazed...

but it is altered to correspond with the printed text.

Again I look'd, and, O ye deities,  
 Who from Olympus watch our destinies! 605  
 Whence that completed form of all completeness?  
 Whence came that high perfection of all-sweetness?  
 Speak, stubborn earth, and tell me where, O where  
 Hast thou a symbol of her golden hair?  
 Not oat-sheaves drooping in the western sun; 610  
 Not — thy soft hand, fair sister! let me shun  
 Such follying before thee — yet she had,  
 Indeed, locks bright enough to make me mad;  
 And they were simply gordian'd up and braided,  
 Leaving, in naked comeliness, unshaded, 615  
 Her pearl round ears, white neck, and orb'd brow;  
 The which were blended in, I know not how,  
 With such a paradise of lips and eyes,  
 Blush-tinted cheeks, half smiles, and faintest sighs,  
 That, when I think thereon, my spirit clings 620  
 And plays about its fancy, till the stings  
 Of human neighbourhood envenom all.  
 Unto what awful power shall I call?  
 To what high fane? — Ah! see her hovering feet,  
 More bluely vein'd, more soft, more whitely sweet 625  
 Than those of sea-born Venus, when she rose  
 From out her cradle shell. The wind out-blows

I felt upmounted in that region  
 Where falling stars dart their artillery forth,  
 And eagles struggle with the buffeting north  
 That ballances the heavy meteor-stone; —  
 Felt too, I was not fearful, nor alone, 645  
 But lapp'd and lull'd along the dangerous sky.  
 Soon, as it seem'd, we left our journeying high,  
 And straightway into frightful eddies swoop'd;  
 Such as aye muster where grey time has scoop'd  
 Huge dens and caverns in a mountain's side: 650  
 There hollow sounds arous'd me, and I sigh'd  
 To faint once more by looking on my bliss —  
 I was distracted; madly did I kiss  
 The wooing arms which held me, and did give  
 My eyes at once to death: but 't was to live, 655  
 To take in draughts of life from the gold fount  
 Of kind and passionate looks; to count, and count  
 The moments, by some greedy help that seem'd  
 A second self, that each might be redeem'd  
 And plunder'd of its load of blessedness. 660  
 Ah, desperate mortal! I e'en dar'd to press  
 Her very cheek against my crowned lip,  
 And, at that moment, felt my body dip  
 Into a warmer air: a moment more,  
 Our feet were soft in flowers. There was store 665

(641) See note to verse 502.

(646) This line stood differently in the manuscript at first, and was followed by two others, now struck out, — thus:

But lapp'd and lull'd in safe deliriousness;  
 Sleepy with deep foretasting, that did bless  
 My Soul from Madness, 't was such certainty.

(648) Cancelled manuscript reading, *fearful* for *frightful*.

(649) The manuscript reads *aye*, the first edition *ay*.

(651) In this line the more violent expression *died* is judiciously superseded by *sigh'd*.

(661) In the manuscript, *e'en*, not *ev'n* as in the first edition. The manuscript should rule here, because the presence of the *v* upsets the rhythm.

(662) In the manuscript, *checks*, with the *s* struck out.

(665) After *flowers* in this line occurs the following cancelled passage in the manuscript:

Hurry o'er  
 O sacrilegious tongue the — best be dumb;  
 For should one little accent from thee come  
 On such a daring theme, all other sounds  
 Would sicken at it, as would beaten hounds  
 Scare the elysian Nightingales.

Between these obliterated lines is a chaos of rubbed-out pencillings, of which the sense is so far recoverable that we can safely call them trial lines, and not a con-

Of newest joys upon that alp. Sometimes  
 A scent of violets, and blossoming limes,  
 Loiter'd around us; then of honey cells,  
 Made delicate from all white-flower bells;  
 And once, above the edges of our nest, 670  
 An arch face peep'd, — an Oread as I guess'd.

“Why did I dream that sleep o'er-power'd me  
 In midst of all this heaven? Why not see,  
 Far off, the shadows of his pinions dark,  
 And stare them from me? But no, like a spark 675  
 That needs must die, although its little beam  
 Reflects upon a diamond, my sweet dream  
 Fell into nothing — into stupid sleep.  
 And so it was, until a gentle creep,  
 A careful moving caught my waking ears, 680  
 And up I started: Ah! my sighs, my tears,  
 My clenched hands; — for lo! the poppies hung  
 Dew-dabbled on their stalks, the ouzel sung  
 A heavy ditty, and the sullen day  
 Had chidden herald Hesperus away, 685  
 With leaden looks: the solitary breeze  
 Bluster'd, and slept, and its wild self did tease  
 With wayward melancholy: and I thought

Of dying fish ; the vermeil rose had blown  
 In frightful scarlet, and its thorns out-grown  
 Like spiked aloe. If an innocent bird  
 Before my heedless footsteps stirr'd, and stirr'd  
 In little journeys, I beheld in it 700  
 A disguis'd demon, missioned to knit  
 My soul with under darkness ; to entice  
 My stumblings down some monstrous precipice :  
 Therefore I eager followed, and did curse  
 The disappointment. Time, that aged nurse, 705  
 Rock'd me to patience. Now, thank gentle heaven !  
 These things, with all their comfortings, are given  
 To my down-sunken hours, and with thee,  
 Sweet sister, help to stem the ebbing sea  
 Of weary life."

Thus ended he, and both 710  
 Sat silent : for the maid was very loth  
 To answer ; feeling well that breathed words  
 Would all be lost, unheard, and vain as swords  
 Against the enchased crocodile, or leaps  
 Of grasshoppers against the sun. She weeps, 715  
 And wonders ; struggles to devise some blame ;  
 To put on such a look as would say, *Shame*  
*On this poor weakness !* but, for all her strife,  
 She could as soon have crush'd away the life  
 And crushed out lives, by secret barbarous ways.  
 From a sick dove. At length, to break the pause, 720  
 She said with trembling chance : " Is this the cause ?  
 This all ? Yet it is strange, and sad, alas !  
 That one who through this middle earth should pass  
 Most like a sojourning demi-god, and leave  
 His name upon the harp-string, should achieve 725  
 No higher bard than simple maidenhood,

(719) Compare Thomson's *Seasons*, *Winter*, line 374 —

And crushed out lives, by secret barbarous ways.

(722) There is a rejected passage here in the manuscript, which stands thus : —

This all ? Yet it is wonderful — exceeding —  
 And yet a shallow dream, for ever breeding  
 Tempestuous Weather in that very Soul  
 That should be twice content, twice smooth, twice whole,  
 As is a double Peach. 'T is sad Alas !

In altering this for the reading of the text Keats left the line thus, short by a foot,

This all ? Yet it is sad Alas !

The words *strange and seem* to have been put in in proof.

Singing alone, and fearfully, — how the blood  
 Left his young cheek; and how he us'd to stray  
 He knew not where; and how he would say, *nay*,  
 If any said 't was love: and yet 't was love; 730  
 What could it be but love? How a ring-dove  
 Let fall a sprig of yew tree in his path;  
 And how he di'd: and then, that love doth scathe,  
 The gentle heart, as northern blasts do roses;  
 And then the ballad of his sad life closes 735  
 With sighs, and an alas! — Endymion!  
 Be rather in the trumpet's mouth, — anon  
 Among the winds at large — that all may hearken!  
 Although, before the crystal heavens darken,  
 I watch and dote upon the silver lakes 740  
 Pictur'd in western cloudiness, that takes  
 The semblance of gold rocks and bright gold sands,  
 Islands, and creeks, and amber-fretted strands  
 With horses prancing o'er them, palaces  
 And towers of amethyst, — would I so tease 745  
 My pleasant days, because I could not mount  
 Into those regions? The Morphean fount  
 Of that fine element that visions, dreams,  
 And fitful whims of sleep are made of, streams  
 Into its airy channels with so subtle, 750

Widened a little, as when Zephyr bids  
 A little breeze to creep between the fans  
 Of careless butterflies: amid his pains  
 He seem'd to taste a drop of manna-dew,  
 Full palatable; and a colour grew  
 Upon his cheek, while thus he lifeful spake. 765

“ Peona! ever have I long'd to slake  
 My thirst for the world's praises: nothing base,  
 No merely slumberous phantasm, could unlace  
 The stubborn canvas for my voyage prepar'd —  
 Though now 't is tatter'd; leaving my bark bar'd  
 And sullenly drifting; yet my higher hope  
 Is of too wide, too rainbow-large a scope,  
 To fret at myriads of earthly wrecks. 775  
 Wherein lies happiness? In that which beck  
 Our ready minds to fellowship divine,  
 A fellowship with essence; till we shine,

(764) The word *breeze* does not occur here in the manuscript, which gives *Breath*, that word being written over *Puff*, struck out. The expression *fans*, though a little whimsical, is a rich and happy designation of the wings of butterflies.

(770) The present Laureate owes to a mere accident this precedent for the term he applies to the coinage of his predecessor —

Of him who uttered nothing base.

In the manuscript the finals of this couplet were originally *mean* and *unseam*; and Keats seems to have discovered that those words do not rhyme, before parting with the manuscript.

(776) The original lines in the manuscript at this point are —

To fret at myriads of earthly wrecks.  
 Wherein lies happiness? In that which beck  
 Our ready minds to blending pleasurable:  
 And that delight is the most treasurable  
 That makes the richest Alchymy. Behold  
 The clear Religion of Heaven! Fold  
 A Rose leaf &c.

This appears to have been next altered to

To fret at sight of this world's losses. For behold  
 Wherein lies happiness Peona. Fold  
 A Rose leaf &c.

But the words *at sight* are separately cancelled, as if that line had been set to rights before the whole passage was struck out, and the six lines of the printed text supplied in the margin. The reading of the text was supplied in a letter from Keats to Taylor bearing the postmark "Hampstead, 30 Jan. 1818"; but in that letter line 781 reads

The clear religion of Heaven — Peona! fold...

As to the pronunciation of religion as four full syllables, see note to line 502.



Full alchemiz'd, and free of space. Behold 780  
 The clear religion of heaven! Fold  
 A rose leaf round thy finger's taperness,  
 And soothe thy lips: hist, when the airy stress  
 Of music's kiss impregnates the free winds,  
 And with a sympathetic touch unbinds 785  
 Æolian magic from their lucid wombs:  
 Then old songs waken from enclouded tombs;  
 Old ditties sigh above their father's grave;  
 Ghosts of melodious prophecyings rave  
 Round every spot where trod Apollo's foot; 790  
 Bronze clarions awake, and faintly bruit,  
 Where long ago a giant battle was;  
 And, from the turf, a lullaby doth pass  
 In every place where infant Orpheus slept.  
 Feel we these things? — that moment have we stept 795  
 Into a sort of oneness, and our state  
 Is like a floating spirit's. But there are  
 Richer entanglements, enthrallments far  
 More self-destroying, leading, by degrees,  
 To the chief intensity: the crown of these 800  
 Is made of love and friendship, and sits high  
 Upon the forehead of humanity.  
 All its more ponderous and bulky worth

And we are nurtured like a pelican brood. 815  
 Aye, so delicious is the unsating food,  
 That men, who might have tower'd in the van  
 Of all the congregated world, to fan  
 And winnow from the coming step of time  
 All chaff of custom, wipe away all slime 820  
 Left by men-slugs and human serpentry,  
 Have been content to let occasion die,  
 Whilst they did sleep in love's elysium.  
 And, truly, I would rather be struck dumb,  
 Than speak against this ardent listlessness : 825  
 For I have ever thought that it might bless  
 The world with benefits unknowingly ;  
 As does the nightingale, upperched high,  
 And cloister'd among cool and bunched leaves —  
 She sings but to her love, nor e'er conceives 830  
 How tiptoe Night holds back her dark-grey hood.  
 Just so may love, although 't is understood  
 The mere commingling of passionate breath,  
 Produce more than our searching witnesseth :  
 What I know not : but who, of men, can tell 835  
 That flowers would bloom, or that green fruit would swell  
 To melting pulp, that fish would have bright mail,  
 The earth its dower of river, wood, and vale,  
 The meadows runnels, runnels pebble-stones,  
 The seed its harvest, or the lute its tones, 840  
 Tones ravishment, or ravishment its sweet  
 If human souls did never kiss and greet?

“ Now, if this earthly love has power to make  
 Men's being mortal, immortal ; to shake  
 Ambition from their memories, and brim 845  
 Their measure of content ; what merest whim,  
 Seems all this poor endeavour after fame,  
 To one, who keeps within his stedfast aim  
 A love immortal, an immortal too.

(823) Cancelled manuscript reading, *Whiles* for *Whilst*.

(844) *Man's* instead of *Men's* in the manuscript, but there is an *e* pencilled over the *a* as if for consideration.

(847) This line originally began with *Shews*, — altered in the manuscript to *Seems*.

(849) In the manuscript thus —

A Love immortal, and immortal too.

The *im* of the first *immortal* is underlined in pencil and the word *both* pencilled over; but it is not clear whether the writing is Keats's. In his edition we have *an* for *and*, which appears to be the right reading, though from the bewilderment of

Look not so wilder'd; for these things are true, 850  
And never can be born of atomies  
That buzz about our slumbers, like brain-flies,  
Leaving us fancy-sick. No, no, I'm sure,  
My restless spirit never could endure  
To brood so long upon one luxury, 855  
Unless it did, though fearfully, espy  
A hope beyond the shadow of a dream.  
My sayings will the less obscured seem,  
When I have told thee how my waking sight  
Has made me scruple whether that same night 860  
Was pass'd in dreaming. Harken, sweet Peona!  
Beyond the matron-temple of Latona,  
Which we should see but for these darkening boughs,  
Lies a deep hollow, from whose ragged brows  
Bushes and trees do lean all round athwart, 865  
And meet so nearly, that with wings outraught,  
And spreaded tail, a vulture could not glide  
Past them, but he must brush on every side.  
Some moulder'd steps lead into this cool cell,  
Far as the slabbed margin of a well, 870  
Whose patient level peeps its crystal eye  
Right upward, through the bushes, to the sky.  
Oft have I brought thee flowers, on their stalks set

Of o'er-head clouds melting the mirror through.  
 Upon a day, while thus I watch'd, by flew  
 A cloudy Cupid, with his bow and quiver;  
 So plainly character'd, no breeze would shiver 890  
 The happy chance: so happy, I was fain  
 To follow it upon the open plain,  
 And, therefore, was just going; when, behold!  
 A wonder, fair as any I have told —  
 The same bright face I tasted in my sleep, 895  
 Smiling in the clear well. My heart did leap  
 Through the cool depth. — It mov'd as if to flee —  
 I started up, when lo! refreshfully,  
 There came upon my face, in plenteous showers,  
 Dew-drops, and dewy buds, and leaves, and flowers, 900  
 Wrapping all objects from my smothered sight,  
 Bathing my spirit in a new delight.

(896) This and the following line take the place of twenty which originally stood in the manuscript. They are as follows:

In the green opening smiling. Gods that keep,  
 Mercifully, a little strength of heart  
 Unkill'd in us by raving, pang and smart;  
 And do preserve it like a lilly root,  
 That, in another spring, it may outshoot  
 From its wintry prison; let this hour go  
 Drawing along its heavy weight of woe  
 And leave me living! 'T is not more than need —  
 Your veriest help. Ah! how long did I feed  
 On that crystalline life of Portraiture!  
 How hover'd breathless at the tender lure!  
 How many times dimpled the watery glass  
 With maddest kisses; and, till they did pass  
 And leave the liquid smooth again, how mad!  
 O 't was as if the absolute sisters had  
 My Life into the compass of a Nut  
 Or all my breathing and shut  
 To a scanty straw. To look above I fear'd  
 Lest my hot eyeballs might be burnt and sear'd  
 By a blank naught. It moved as if to flee —

The first few words of this passage were, intermediately, altered to *Deep in the clear water smiling*; and before the two lines of the printed text appear in the margin we have the trial line

Was there } reflected. How my heart did leap..  
 I saw }

and Keats first wrote *Down* instead of *Through* as the initial word of line 897. The only line in the cancelled twenty of which there are two readings is

How hover'd breathless at the tender lure!

which is altered to

How long I hover'd round the tender lure!

Aye, such a breathless honey-feel of bliss  
Alone preserv'd me from the drear abyss  
Of death, for the fair form had gone again. 905  
Pleasure is oft a visitant; but pain  
Clings cruelly to us, like the gnawing sloth  
On the deer's tender haunches: late, and loth,  
'T is scar'd away by slow returning pleasure.  
How sickening, how dark the dreadful leisure 910  
Of weary days, made deeper exquisite,  
By a fore-knowledge of unslumbrous night!  
Like sorrow came upon me, heavier still,  
Than when I wander'd from the poppy hill:  
And a whole age of lingering moments crept 915  
Sluggishly by, ere more contentment swept  
Away at once the deadly yellow spleen.  
Yes, thrice have I this fair enchantment seen;  
Once more been tortured with renewed life.  
When last the wintry gusts gave over strife 920  
With the conquering sun of spring, and left the skies  
Warm and serene, but yet with moistened eyes  
In pity of the shatter'd infant buds, —  
That time thou didst adorn, with amber studs,  
My hunting cap, because I laugh'd and smil'd, 925  
Chatted with thee, and many days exil'd

Thick, as to curtain up some wood-nymph's home.  
 " Ah ! impious mortal, whither do I roam ? "  
 Said I, low voic'd : " Ah, whither ! 'T is the grot  
 " Of Proserpine, when Hell, obscure and hot,  
 " Doth her resign ; and where her tender hands 945  
 " She dabbles, on the cool and sluicy sands :  
 " Or 't is the cell of Echo, where she sits,  
 " And babbles thorough silence, till her wits  
 " Are gone in tender madness, and anon,  
 " Faints into sleep, with many a dying tone 950  
 " Of sadness. O that she would take my vows,  
 " And breathe them sighingly among the boughs,  
 " To sue her gentle ears for whose fair head,  
 " Daily, I pluck sweet flowerets from their bed,  
 " And weave them dyingly — send honey-whispers 955  
 " Round every leaf, that all those gentle lispers  
 " May sigh my love unto her pitying !  
 " O charitable echo ! hear, and sing  
 " This ditty to her ! — tell her " — so I stay'd  
 My foolish tongue, and listening, half afraid, 960  
 Stood stupefied with my own empty folly,  
 And blushing for the freaks of melancholy.  
 Salt tears were coming, when I heard my name  
 Most fondly lipp'd, and then these accents came :  
 " Endymion ! the cave is secreter 965  
 " Than the isle of Delos. Echo hence shall stir  
 " No sighs but sigh-warm kisses, or light noise  
 " Of thy combing hand, the while it travelling cloys  
 " And trembles through my labyrinthine hair."  
 At that oppress'd I hurried in. — Ah ! where 970  
 Are those swift moments ? Whither are they fled ?  
 I'll smile no more, Peona ; nor will wed  
 Sorrow the way to death ; but patiently

(960) In the manuscript, *listening* is contracted to *list'ning*.

(964) There is a cancelled passage here in the manuscript after *Most fondly lipp'd*, thus —

I kept me still — it came  
 Again in passionatest syllables,  
 And thus again that voice's tender swells :

and there is another rejected reading of one line —

Again in passionate syllables : saying :...

(969) In the manuscript *labyrinthian* for *labyrinthine*.

(970) The words *At that oppress'd I hurried in* are struck out of the manuscript, though restored by a *Stet*, and in the margin we have *Since then I never and I never saw her Beauty more*, both cancelled.

Bear up against it: so farewell, sad sigh;  
 And come instead demurest meditation, 975  
 To occupy me wholly, and to fashion  
 My pilgrimage for the world's dusky brink.  
 No more will I count over, link by link,  
 My chain of grief: no longer strive to find  
 A half-forgetfulness in mountain wind 980  
 Blustering about my ears: aye, thou shalt see,  
 Dearest of sisters, what my life shall be;  
 What a calm round of hours shall make my days.  
 There is a paly flame of hope that plays  
 Where'er I look: but yet, I'll say 't is naught — 985  
 And here I bid it die. Have not I caught,  
 Already, a more healthy countenance?  
 By this the sun is setting; we may chance  
 Meet some of our near-dwellers with my car."

This said, he rose, faint-smiling like a star 990  
 Through autumn mists, and took Peona's hand:  
 They stept into the boat, and launch'd from land.

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(990) Cancelled manuscript reading, *At this for This said.*

# ENDYMION.

## BOOK II.

O SOVEREIGN power of love! O grief! O balm!  
All records, saving thine, come cool, and calm,  
And shadowy, through the mist of passed years:  
For others, good or bad, hatred and tears  
Have become indolent; but touching thine, 5  
One sigh doth echo, one poor sob doth pine,  
One kiss brings honey-dew from buried days.  
The woes of Troy, towers smothering o'er their blaze,  
Stiff-holden shields, far-piercing spears, keen blades,  
Struggling, and blood, and shrieks — all dimly fades 10  
Into some backward corner of the brain;  
Yet, in our very souls, we feel amain  
The close of Troilus and Cressid sweet.  
Hence, pageant history! hence, gilded cheat!

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(1) From this point the various readings are from two separate manuscripts, as explained in the note at page 65 of this volume. It is to be understood that, when the word *manuscript* alone is used, the reading is from the finished copy sent to the press, and that the term *draft* refers to the copy of the last three Books which was written into a blank book before being fairly transcribed for the printer.

(5) The draft reads *but O! for thine* instead of *but touching thine*.

(7) In the draft, *sends* for *brings*. Compare this line with the following from Shakespeare —

Enjoy the honey-heavy dew of slumber  
(*Julius Caesar*, Act II, Scene 1, line 230);  
A thousand honey secrets shalt thou know:  
(*Venus and Adonis*, line 16);

and with the memorable line in Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*,

For he on honey-dew hath fed.

(8) The draft reads *crashing* for *smothering*; and in the next line *far-reaching spears, clear blades*.

(13-14) In the draft this couplet was written —

The close of Troilus and Cressida.  
Hence pageant history! away proud star.

In the final manuscript there is a cancelled reading of line 14,

Away pageant History! away proud dull feat.

A doubt appears to have been entertained as to the precise value of *close* in this



Swart planet in the universe of deeds !	15
Wide sea, that one continuous murmur breeds	
Along the pebbled shore of memory !	
Many old rotten-timber'd boats there be	
Upon thy vaporous bosom, magnify'd	
To goodly vessels ; many a sail of pride,	20
And golden keel'd, is left unlaunch'd and dry.	
But wherefore this ? What care, though owl did fly	
About the great Athenian admiral's mast ?	
What care, though striding Alexander past	
The Indus with his Macedonian numbers ?	25
Though old Ulysses tortured from his slumbers	
The gluttoned Cyclops, what care ? — Juliet leaning	
Amid her window-flowers, — sighing, — weaning	
Tenderly her fancy from its maiden snow,	
Doth more avail than these : the silver flow	30
Of Hero's tears, the swoon of Imogen,	
Fair Pastorella in the bandit's den,	
Are things to brood on with more ardency	
Than the death-day of empires. Fearfully	
Must such conviction come upon his head,	35
Who, thus far, discontent, has dar'd to tread,	
Without one muse's smile, or kind behest,	
The path of love and poesy. But rest,	

In chaffing restlessness, is yet more drear  
 Than to be crush'd, in striving to uprear 40  
 Love's standard on the battlements of song.  
 So once more days and nights aid me along,  
 Like legion'd soldiers.

Brain-sick shepherd prince,  
 What promise hast thou faithful guarded since  
 The day of sacrifice? Or, have new sorrows 45  
 Come with the constant dawn upon thy morrows?  
 Alas! 'tis his old grief. For many days,  
 Has he been wandering in uncertain ways:  
 Through wilderness, and woods of mossed oaks;  
 Counting his woe-worn minutes, by the strokes 50  
 Of the lone woodcutter; and listening still,  
 Hour after hour, to each lush-leav'd rill.  
 Now he is sitting by a shady spring,  
 And elbow-deep with feverous fingering  
 Stems the upbursting cold: a wild rose tree 55  
 Pavillions him in bloom, and he doth see  
 A bud which snares his fancy: lo! but now  
 He plucks it, dips its stalk in the water: how!

---

*rest* as employed on this occasion. What was originally written was *To rest In chaffing discontent*. Though the verb *to rest* is a common equivalent for *to remain*, the noun *rest* has usually a sense of recuperation after labour; but its meaning here is probably, considering how it came here, merely inactivity, without the recuperative *arrière pensée*. The final manuscript and the printed book both perpetuate the word *chaffing* for *chafing*. Spenser spells the word with two *f*'s, but with a *u* also, thus (*Faerie Queene*, Book VI, Canto II, stanza 21):

After long search and chauff he turned backe.

(43) In the draft *sturdy* was originally written in the place of *legion'd*; and in the finished manuscript is the cancelled reading *Fainting* for *Brain-sick*. Through counting this broken line as two, the printer numbered line 49 as 50 in the first edition, thus throwing out the whole of the numbering to the end of Book II; and the metrical numbering is further falsified in two similar instances further on.

(44) See the promises recorded in lines 477 *et seq.* and 978 *et seq.* of Book I.

(49) The words *brittle mossed oaks* occur in the draft for *woods of mossed oaks*.

(51) Cancelled reading in the draft *distant*, and in the manuscript *lonely*, for *lone*.

(52) This line is precisely according to the manuscript and the first edition, so that there can be no doubt the word *hour* is to be scanned first as one syllable and then as two.

(53) *E'en now he's* occurs in the draft in place of *Now he is*.

(56) The draft gives the reading *Bends lightly over him* for *Pavillions him in bloom*.

(57) In the draft, *takes* for *snares*.

(58) In the manuscript, *in* was originally contracted to *f*; but *in* is inserted as a correction.

It swells, it buds, it flowers beneath his sight ;  
 And, in the middle, there is softly pight 60  
 A golden butterfly ; upon whose wings  
 There must be surely character'd strange things,  
 For with wide eye he wonders, and smiles oft.

Lightly this little herald flew aloft,  
 Follow'd by glad Endymion's clasped hands : 65  
 Onward it flies. From languor's sullen bands  
 His limbs are loos'd, and eager, on he hies  
 Dazzled to trace it in the sunny skies.  
 It seem'd he flew, the way so easy was ;  
 And like a new-born spirit did he pass 70  
 Through the green evening quiet in the sun,  
 O'er many a heath, through many a woodland dun,  
 Through buried paths, where sleepy twilight dreams  
 The summer time away. One track unseems  
 A wooded cleft, and, far away, the blue 75  
 Of ocean fades upon him ; then, anew,  
 He sinks adown a solitary glen,  
 Where there was never sound of mortal men,  
 Saving, perhaps, some snow-light cadences  
 Melting to silence, when upon the breeze 80  
 Some holy bark let forth an anthem sweet,

That, near a cavern's mouth, for ever pour'd 85  
 Unto the temperate air: then high it soar'd,  
 And, downward, suddenly began to dip,  
 As if, athirst with so much toil, 'twould sip  
 Thy crystal spout-head: so it did, with touch  
 Most delicate, as though afraid to smutch 90  
 Even with mealy gold the waters clear.  
 But, at that very touch, to disappear  
 So fairy-quick, was strange! Bewildered,  
 Endymion sought around, and shook each bed  
 Of covert flowers in vain; and then he flung 95  
 Himself along the grass. What gentle tongue,  
 What whisperer disturb'd his gloomy rest?  
 It was a nymph uprisen to the breast  
 In the fountain's pebbly margin, and she stood  
 'Mong lillies, like the youngest of the brood. 100  
 To him her dripping hand she softly kist,  
 And anxiously began to plait and twist  
 Her ringlets round her fingers, saying: " Youth!  
 Too long, alas, hast thou starv'd on the ruth,  
 The bitterness of love: too long indeed, 105  
 Seeing thou art so gentle. Could I weed  
 Thy soul of care, by heavens, I would offer  
 All the bright riches of my crystal coffer  
 To Amphitrite; all my clear-ey'd fish,  
 Golden, or rainbow-sided, or purplish, 110  
 Vermilion-tail'd, or finn'd with silvery gauze;  
 Yea, or my veined pebble-floor, that draws

(86) The draft reads *whereat it soar'd*, and begins the next line with *Then* instead of *And*.

(93) At this point the draft has the rejected reading —

Endymion all around the welkin sped  
 His anxious sight,

and a further variation is *Endymion pry'd around*.

(96-97) In the draft these two lines were written —

His sullen limbs upon the grass — what tongue,  
 What airy whisperer spoil his angry rest?

(99) Here is a further instance of the contracted *I'* being altered to *In* in the finished manuscript. In the draft *basin* occurs in the place of *margin*.

(102) In the draft is the variation

And carelessly began to twine and twist  
 Her ringlets 'bout her fingers...

(104) This line originally began with the words *Long hast thou tasted*, and the next line with *The bitter ruth of love*.

A virgin light to the deep; my grotto-sands  
 Tawny and gold, ooz'd slowly from far lands  
 By my diligent springs; my level lillies, shells, 115  
 My charming rod, my potent river spells;  
 Yes, every thing, even to the pearly cup  
 Meander gave me, — for I bubbled up  
 To fainting creatures in a desert wild.  
 But woe is me, I am but as a child 120  
 To gladden thee; and all I dare to say,  
 Is, that I pity thee; that on this day  
 I've been thy guide; that thou must wander far  
 In other regions, past the scanty bar  
 To mortal steps, before thou cans't be ta'en 125  
 From every wasting sigh, from every pain,  
 Into the gentle bosom of thy love.  
 Why it is thus, one knows in heaven above:  
 But, a poor Naiad, I guess not. Farewell!  
 I have a ditty for my hollow cell." 130

Hereat, she vanished from Endymion's gaze,  
 Who brooded o'er the water in amaze:  
 The dashing fount pour'd on, and where its pool  
 Lay, half asleep, in grass and rushes cool,

Glow-worms began to trim their starry lamps,  
 Thus breath'd he to himself: " Whoso encamps  
 To take a fancied city of delight,  
 O what a wretch is he ! and when 'tis his,  
 After long toil and travelling, to miss 145  
 The kernel of his hopes, how more than vile :  
 Yet, for him there's refreshment even in toil ;  
 Another city doth he set about,  
 Free from the smallest pebble-bead of doubt  
 That he will seize on trickling honey-combs : 150  
 Alas, he finds them dry ; and then he foams,  
 And onward to another city speeds.  
 But this is human life : the war, the deeds,  
 The disappointment, the anxiety,  
 Imagination's struggles, far and nigh, 155  
 All human ; bearing in themselves this good,  
 That they are still the air, the subtle food,  
 To make us feel existence, and to show  
 How quiet death is. Where soil is men grow,  
 Whether to weeds or flowers ; but for me, 160  
 There is no depth to strike in : I can see  
 Nought earthly worth my compassing ; so stand  
 Upon a misty, jutting head of land —  
 Alone ? No, no ; and by the Orphean lute,  
 When mad Eurydice is listening to't ; 165  
 I'd rather stand upon this misty peak,

(143) The manner in which the rhyme to this line was lost appears from the draft, where the passage originally stood thus :

Whoso encamps  
 His soul to take a city of delight  
 O what a wretch is he : 'tis in his sight...

Then *'tis in his sight* was struck out in favour of *and when 'tis his* ; but nothing was done, in transcribing for the press, to remedy the defect thus produced.

(145) The original reading in the draft was *After long siegs and travailing* ; but the finished manuscript reads *toil and travelling* as in the text.

(147) The draft reads *e'en for even*.

(149) In the first edition, *pebble-head* ; but in the manuscript, *pebble-bead*, which reading is restored in the corrected copy in my possession. The draft reads *With-out for Free from*, and in the next line *there he'll for he will*.

(153) In the draft, *acts for war*.

(155) *Imaginings and searchings*, in the draft.

(158) In the first edition, *shew*.

(159) *Here is soil to grow* was originally written in the draft.

(164) In the draft, *Alone ? No, heavens !*

(166) Originally written *I'd rather bide*, in the draft.

With not a thing to sigh for, or to seek,  
 But the soft shadow of my thrice-seen love,  
 Than be — I care not what. O meekest dove  
 Of heaven! O Cynthia, ten-times bright and fair! 170  
 From thy blue throne, now filling all the air,  
 Glance but one little beam of temper'd light  
 Into my bosom, that the dreadful might  
 And tyranny of love be somewhat scar'd!  
 Yet do not so, sweet queen; one torment spar'd, 175  
 Would give a pang to jealous misery,  
 Worse than the torment's self: but rather tie  
 Large wings upon my shoulders, and point out  
 My love's far dwelling. Though the playful rout  
 Of cupids shun thee, too divine art thou, 180  
 Too keen in beauty, for thy silver prow  
 Not to have dipp'd in love's most gentle stream.  
 O be propitious, nor severely deem  
 My madness impious; for, by all the stars  
 That tend thy bidding, I do think the bars 185  
 That kept my spirit in are burst — that I  
 Am sailing with thee through the dizzy sky!  
 How beautiful thou art! The world how deep!  
 How tremulous-dazzlingly the wheels sweep  
 Around their axle! Then these gleaming reins, 190  
 How light! When this the chariot attain

And lifted hands, and trembling lips he stood ;  
 Like old Deucalion mountain'd o'er the flood,  
 Or blind Orion hungry for the morn.  
 And, but from the deep cavern there was borne  
 A voice, he had been froze to senseless stone ; 200  
 Nor sigh of his, nor plaint, nor passion'd moan  
 Had more been heard. Thus swell'd it forth : " Descend,  
 Young mountaineer ! descend where alleys bend  
 Into the sparry hollows of the world !  
 Oft hast thou seen bolts of the thunder hurl'd 205  
 As from thy threshold ; day by day hast been  
 A little lower than the chilly sheen  
 Of icy pinnacles, and dipp'dst thine arms  
 Into the deadening ether that still charms  
 Their marble being : new, as deep profound 210  
 As those are high, descend ! He ne'er is crown'd  
 With immortality, who fears to follow  
 Where airy voices lead : so through the hollow,  
 The silent mysteries of earth, descend ! "

He heard but the last words, nor could contend 215  
 One moment in reflection : for he fled  
 Into the fearful deep, to hide his head  
 From the clear moon, the trees, and coming madness.

T'was far too strange, and wonderful for sadness ;

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(198) Here the draft yields the reading —

Or blind Orion waiting for the dawn —

Further evidence of Keats's determination to get rid of the false rhymes were served. The next line was originally written —

And, but from the *hollow* cavern there was *born* —

and I am not sure that *born* is not the word intended, though *borne*, the reading of the first edition, must have the preference.

(201) The original reading of the draft is

Nor sigh of his, nor wild complaint nor moan.

(204) This line originally began in the draft with the word *Spiral*.

(208) The draft has the reading *and couldst dip thy palms...*

(210) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *far* for *deep*.

(211) In the draft

As those were high, descend ! He ne'er was crown'd...

(214) The draft reads *fearful* for *silent*.

(215) In the manuscript, *But the last words he heard* ; but the reading of the text clearly a revision.

(218) The draft reads *night* for *moon*, and in the next line but one *Upwinding* for *carpening*.



Sharpening, by degrees, his appetite 220  
 To dive into the deepest. Dark nor light,  
 The region; nor bright, nor sombre wholly,  
 But mingled up; a gleaming melancholy;  
 A dusky empire and its diadems;  
 One faint eternal eventide of gems. 225  
 Aye, millions sparkled on a vein of gold,  
 Along whose track the prince quick footsteps told,  
 With all its lines abrupt and angular:  
 Out-shooting sometimes, like a meteor-star,  
 Through a vast antre; then the metal woof, 230  
 Like Vulcan's rainbow, with some monstrous roof  
 Curves hugely: now, far in the deep abyss,  
 It seems an angry lightning, and doth hiss  
 Fancy into belief: anon it leads  
 Through winding passages, where sameness breeds 235  
 Vexing conceptions of some sudden change;  
 Whether to silver grotts, or giant range  
 Of sapphire columns, or fantastic bridge  
 Athwart a flood of crystal. On a ridge  
 Now fareth he, that o'er the vast beneath 240  
 Towers like an ocean-cliff, and whence he seeth  
 A hundred waterfalls, whose voices come  
 But as the murmuring surge — Chilly and numb

Will be its high remembrances : who they?  
 The mighty ones who have made eternal day  
 For Greece and England. While ascertainment  
 With deep-drawn sighs was quieting, he went 255  
 Into a marble gallery, passing through  
 A mimic temple, so complete and true  
 In sacred custom, that he well might fear'd  
 To search it inwards : whence far off appear'd,  
 Through a long pillar'd vista, a fair shrine, 260  
 And, just beyond, on light tiptoe divine,  
 A quiver'd Dian. Stepping awfully,  
 The youth approach'd : oft turning his veil'd eye  
 Down sidelong aisles, and into niches old.  
 And when, more near against the marble cold 265  
 He had touch'd his forehead, he began to thread  
 All courts and passages, where silence dead  
 Rous'd by his whispering footsteps murmured faint :  
 And long he travers'd to and fro, to acquaint  
 Himself with every mystery, and awe ; 270  
 Till, weary, he sat down before the maw  
 Of a wide outlet, fathomless and dim,  
 To wild uncertainty and shadows grim.  
 There, when new wonders ceas'd to float before,  
 And thoughts of self came on, how crude and sore 275  
 The journey homeward to habitual self!  
 A mad-pursuing of the fog-born elf,

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(253-4) Originally written in the draft —

The mighty ones who've shone athwart the day  
 Of Greece and England.

(256-7) Cancelled reading from the draft —

Into a marble gallery that near the roof  
 Of a fair mimic Temple...

(261-3) Cancelled reading from the draft —

Thro' a long vist' of columns a fair shrine  
 And just beyond lightly diminished  
 A Dian quiver'd tiptoe, crescented —

(264) The draft reads *sideway aisles*.

(266) In the manuscript *tread* stands here altered to *thread*.

(267) The draft reads *The* for *All*.

(269) The words *to acquaint* in the manuscript are contracted to *l'acquaint*.

(270-2) In the draft,

Himself with every mystery, until  
 His weary legs he rested on the sill  
 Of some remotest chamber, outlet dim...

(277) The draft reads *That* for *A*.

Whose flitting lantern, through rude nettle-briar,  
 Cheats us into a swamp, into a fire,  
 Into the bosom of a hated thing. 280

What misery most drowningly doth sing  
 In lone Endymion's ear, now he has raught  
 The goal of consciousness? Ah, 'tis the thought,  
 The deadly feel of solitude: for lo!

He cannot see the heavens, nor the flow  
 Of rivers, nor hill-flowers running wild 285

In pink and purple chequer, nor, up-pil'd,  
 The cloudy rack slow journeying in the west,  
 Like herded elephants; nor felt, nor prest  
 Cool grass, nor tasted the fresh slumberous air; 290

But far from such companionship to wear  
 An unknown time, surcharg'd with grief, away,  
 Was now his lot. And must he patient stay,  
 Tracing fantastic figures with his spear?

"No!" exclaim'd he, "why should I tarry here?" 295  
 No! loudly echoed times innumerable.

At which he straightway started, and 'gan tell  
 His paces back into the temple's chief;  
 Warming and glowing strong in the belief  
 Of help from Dian: so that when again 300

Moving more near the while : " O Haunter chaste  
 Of river sides, and woods, and heathy waste,  
 Where with thy silver bow and arrows keen  
 Art thou now forested? O woodland Queen, 305  
 What smoothest air thy smoother forehead woos?  
 Where dost thou listen to the wide halloos  
 Of thy departed nymphs? Through what dark tree  
 Glimmers thy crescent? Wheresoe'er it be,  
 'Tis in the breath of heaven : thou dost taste 310  
 Freedom as none can taste it, nor dost waste  
 Thy loveliness in dismal elements ;  
 But, finding in our green earth sweet contents,  
 There livest blissfully. Ah, if to thee  
 It feels Elysian, how rich to me, 315  
 An exil'd mortal, sounds its pleasant name !  
 Within my breast there lives a choking flame —  
 O let me cool 't the zephyr-boughs among !  
 A homeward fever parches up my tongue —  
 O let me slake it at the running springs ! 320  
 Upon my ear a noisy nothing rings —  
 O let me once more hear the linnet's note !  
 Before mine eyes thick films and shadows float —  
 O let me 'noint them with the heaven's light !  
 Dost thou now lave thy feet and ankles white? 325  
 O think how sweet to me the freshening sluice !  
 Dost thou now please thy thirst with berry-juice?

(304) The draft reads —

Where now with silver bow and arrows keen  
 Art thou in covert hid?

(308) In the draft there is a rejected reading, *From what deep glen...*

(313) In the finished manuscript, *on for in*.

(318) In the finished manuscript, *cool't for cool it* : otherwise the line is really written as the first edition gives it —

O let me cool it among the zephyr-boughs !

But it seems absolutely certain that *among* was meant to be at the end, to rhyme with *tongue*, — an assurance made doubly sure by the fact that the line was originally written in the draft —

O let me cool't among the waving boughs !

and marked for transposition of *among* to the end. Thus Keats clearly in copying the line altered *waving* to *zephyr* but forgot the transposition.

(319) In the draft this line was written thus —

A fever parches up my suppliant tongue —

and then altered to

An endless fever parches up my tongue.

(325) In the finished manuscript *hands* stands cancelled in favour of *foot*.

(327) The draft reads *cherry-juice*.

O think how this dry palate would rejoice !  
 If in soft slumber thou dost hear my voice,  
 O think how I should love a bed of flowers !— 330  
 Young goddess ! let me see my native bowers !  
 Deliver me from this rapacious deep ! ”

Thus ending loudly, as he would o'erleap  
 His destiny, alert he stood : but when  
 Obstinate silence came heavily again, 335  
 Feeling about for its old couch of space  
 And airy cradle, lowly bow'd his face  
 Desponding, o'er the marble floor's cold thrill.  
 But 'twas not long ; for, sweeter than the rill  
 To its old channel, or a swollen tide 340  
 To margin shallows, were the leaves he spied,  
 And flowers, and wreaths, and ready myrtle crowns  
 Up heaping through the slab : refreshment drowns  
 Itself, and strives its own delights to hide —  
 Nor in one spot alone ; the floral pride 345  
 In a long whispering birth enchanted grew  
 Before his footsteps ; as when heav'd anew  
 Old ocean rolls a lengthened wave to the shore,

(330) In the draft, *would* instead of *should* ; *Oh* for *Young* in the next line ; and

Down whose green back the short-liv'd foam, all hoar,  
Bursts gradual, with a wayward indolence. 350

Increasing still in heart, and pleasant sense,  
Upon his fairy journey on he hastes;  
So anxious for the end, he scarcely wastes  
One moment with his hand among the sweets:  
Onward he goes — he stops — his bosom beats 355  
As plainly in his ear, as the faint charm  
Of which the throbs were born. This still alarm,  
This sleepy music, forc'd him walk tiptoe:  
For it came more softly than the east could blow  
Arion's magic to the Atlantic isles; 360  
Or than the west, made jealous by the smiles  
Of thron'd Apollo, could breathe back the lyre  
To seas Ionian and Tyrian.

finished manuscript corresponds here precisely with the printed text; and there can be no doubt the redundant *the* in line 348 is an intentional undulation. Strictly there are two undulations in the line, because the final syllable of *lengthened* is to be pronounced, according to Keats's practice.

(353) The manuscript reads *wails* in place of *wastes*.

(359) In the manuscript, *For it* is contracted into *For't*.

(363) The draft supplies the history of the loss of a rhyme to this line; but I fear it must remain rhymeless. The passage was left thus in the draft:

To seas Ionian and Tyrian. Dire  
Was the love lorn despair to which it wrought  
Endymion — for dire is the bare thought  
That among lovers things of tenderest worth  
Are swallow'd all, and made a blank — a dearth  
By one devouring flame: and far far worse  
Blessing to them become a heavy curse  
Half happy till comparisons of bliss  
To misery lead them. 'Twas even so with this...

Before this was finished there were the following readings of two of the lines —

Endymion — for dire to { placid } bosoms is the thought,  
quiet }

and

Half happy will they gaze upon the sky;

and when the passage was altered in copying out the poem for the press, the first reading (cancelled) of line 365 was —

Whom, loving, Music slew not,

while, in line 371, *comparisons*, not *comparison*, was written, and line 372 was left thus —

Is miserable. 'T[was] e'en so with this...

The omission of *was* is curious. It seems that, in altering line 363 and making line 364 rhyme with it, Keats overlooked the needs of line 362: there is nothing in the finished manuscript to show that he or Taylor had any misgivings on the subject,

O did he ever live, that lonely man,  
 Who lov'd — and music slew not? 'Tis the pest 365  
 Of love, that fairest joys give most unrest ;  
 That things of delicate and tenderest worth  
 Are swallow'd all, and made a seared dearth,  
 By one consuming flame : it doth immerse  
 And suffocate true blessings in a curse. 370  
 Half-happy, by comparison of bliss,  
 Is miserable. 'Twas even so with this  
 Dew-dropping melody, in the Carian's ear ;  
 First heaven, then hell, and then forgotten clear,  
 Vanish'd in elemental passion. 375

And down some swart abysm he had gone,  
 Had not a heavenly guide benignant led  
 To where thick myrtle branches, 'gainst his head  
 Brushing, awakened : then the sounds again  
 Went noiseless as a passing noontide rain 380  
 Over a bower, where little space he stood ;  
 For as the sunset peeps into a wood  
 So saw he panting light, and towards it went  
 Through winding alleys ; and lo, wonderment !

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though it is quite possible there may have been an intention to introduce some such

Upon soft verdure saw, one here, one there, 385  
Cupids a slumbering on their pinions fair.

After a thousand mazes overgone,  
At last, with sudden step, he came upon  
A chamber, myrtle wall'd, embowered high,  
Full of light, incense, tender minstrelsy, 390  
And more of beautiful and strange beside :  
For on a silken couch of rosy pride,  
In midst of all, there lay a sleeping youth  
Of fondest beauty ; fonder, in fair sooth,  
Than sighs could fathom, or contentment reach : 395  
And coverlids gold-tinted like the peach,  
Or ripe October's faded marigolds,

should be compared with Spenser's account of "the garlins of Adonis" (*Faerie Queene*, Book III, Canto VI) which probably suggested to Keats the embodiment of the legend in his poem. One would think stanzas 44, 46, and 47, at all events, must have been fresh in his memory :

And in the thickest covert of that shade  
There was a pleasaunt Arber, not by art  
But of the trees owne inclination made,  
Which knitting their rancke braunches, part to part,  
With wanton yvie twine entrayld athwart,  
And Eglantine and Caprifole emong,  
Fashion'd above within their inmost part,  
That neither Phœbus beams could through them throng,  
Nor Aeolus sharp blast could worke them any wrong.

There wont fayre Venus often to enjoy  
Her deare Adonis joyous company,  
And reape sweet pleasure of the wanton ooy :  
There yet, some say, in secret he does ly,  
Lapped in flowres and pretious spycery,  
By her hid from the world, and from the skill  
Of Stygian Gods, which doe her love envy ;  
But she her selfe, when ever that she will,  
Possesseth him, and of his sweetnesse takes her fill.

And sooth, it seemes, they say ; for he may not  
For ever dye, and ever buried bee  
In balefull night where all things are forgot :  
All be he subject to mortalitie,  
Yet is eterne in mutabilitie,  
And by succession made perpetuall,  
Transformed oft, and chaunged diverslie,  
For him the Father of all formes they call :  
Therefore needs mote he live, that living gives to all.

The word *eterne* (used further on, in Book III, line 42) probably passed into Keats's vocabulary from this last stanza.

(396-7) In the draft—

And draperies mellow-tinted like the peach,  
Or lady peas entwined with marigolds.



Fell sleek about him in a thousand folds —  
 Not hiding up an Apollonian curve  
 Of neck and shoulder, nor the tenting swerve 400  
 Of knee from knee, nor ankles pointing light;  
 But rather, giving them to the filled sight  
 Officially. Sideway his face repos'd  
 On one white arm, and tenderly unclos'd,  
 By tenderest pressure, a faint damask mouth 405  
 To slumbery pout; just as the morning south  
 Disparts a dew-lipp'd rose. Above his head,  
 Four lilly stalks did their white honours wed  
 To make a coronal; and round him grew 410  
 All tendrils green, of every bloom and hue,  
 Together interwin'd and trammel'd fresh:  
 The vine of glossy sprout; the ivy mesh,  
 Shading its Ethiop berries; and woodbine,  
 Of velvet leaves and bugle-blooms divine;  
 Convolvulus in streaked vases flush; 415  
 The creeper, mellowing for an autumn blush;  
 And virgin's bower, trailing airily;  
 With others of the sisterhood. Hard by,  
 Stood serene Cupids watching silently.

(399) Cancelled manuscript reading, *his* for *an*.

(400) Woodhouse seems to have been in doubt what *tenting swerve* meant; for



One, kneeling to a lyre, touch'd the strings, 420  
Muffling to death the pathos with his wings;  
And, ever and anon, uprose to look  
At the youth's slumber; while another took  
A willow-bough, distilling odorous dew,  
And shook it on his hair; another flew 425  
In through the woven roof, and fluttering-wise  
Rain'd violets upon his sleeping eyes.

At these enchantments, and yet many more,  
The breathless Latmian wonder'd o'er and o'er;  
Until, impatient in embarrassment, 430  
He forthright pass'd, and lightly treading went  
To that same feather'd lyrist, who straightway,  
Smiling, thus whisper'd: "Though from upper day  
Thou art a wanderer, and thy presence here  
Might seem unholy, be of happy cheer! 435  
For 'tis the nicest touch of human honor,  
When some ethereal and high-favouring donor  
Presents immortal bowers to mortal sense;  
As now 'tis done to thee, Endymion. Hence  
Was I in no wise startled. So recline 440  
Upon these living flowers. Here is wine,  
Alive with sparkles — never, I aver,  
Since Ariadne was a vintager,  
So cool a purple: taste these juicy pears,  
Sent me by sad Vertumnus, when his fears 445  
Were high about Pomona: here is cream,  
Deepening to richness from a snowy gleam;  
Sweeter than that nurse Amalthea skimm'd  
For the boy Jupiter: and here, undimm'd

(424) The draft reads *A myrtle-bough*, and in the next line but one *In from the branched roof*.

(429) In the draft, Endymion was described as *The mortal Latmian*.

(436) *The nicest touch of human honor* is a curious and not very perspicuous phrase; but the fact that the original reading of the draft was *the highest reach of human honor* leaves us in no doubt that Endymion was given to understand he was receiving the greatest honour that could be conferred on a human being.

(442) In the draft the line began with *Sparkling up diamonds*.

(443) It was a peculiarly happy piece of poetic realism to translate Ariadne's relations with Bacchus into her becoming a vintager; and I presume this was Keats's own thought, as well as the idea immediately following, that the God of Orchards conciliated Love with a gift of pears when paying his addresses to Pomona.

(448) In the draft,

Even sweet as that which Amalthea skimm'd.

By any touch, a bunch of blooming plums  
Ready to melt between an infant's gums : 450  
And here is manna pick'd from Syrian trees,  
In starlight, by the three Hesperides.  
Feast on, and meanwhile I will let thee know  
Of all these things around us." He did so, 455  
Still brooding o'er the cadence of his lyre ;  
And thus : " I need not any hearing tire  
By telling how the sea-born goddess pin'd  
For a mortal youth, and how she strove to bind  
Him all in all unto her doting self. 460  
Who would not be so prison'd? but, fond elf,  
He was content to let her amorous plea  
Faint through his careless arms ; content to see  
An unseiz'd heaven dying at his feet ;  
Content, O fool! to make a cold retreat, 465  
When on the pleasant grass such love, lovelorn,  
Lay sorrowing ; when every tear was born  
Of diverse passion ; when her lips and eyes  
Were clos'd in sullen moisture, and quick sighs  
Came vex'd and pettish through her nostrils small. 470  
Hush! no exclaim — yet, justly mightst thou call  
Curses upon his head. — I was half glad,  
But my poor mistress went distract and mad,  
When the boar tusk'd him : so away she flew



Of this still region all his winter-sleep. 480  
 Aye, sleep; for when our love-sick queen did weep  
 Over his waned corse, the tremulous shower  
 Heal'd up the wound, and, with a balmy power,  
 Medicin'd death to a lengthened drowsiness:  
 The which she fills with visions, and doth dress 485  
 In all this quiet luxury; and hath set  
 Us young immortals, without any let,  
 To watch his slumber through. 'Tis well nigh pass'd,  
 Even to a moment's filling up, and fast  
 She scuds with summer breezes, to pant through 490  
 The first long kiss, warm firstling, to renew  
 Embower'd sports in Cytherea's isle.  
 Look! how those winged listeners all this while  
 Stood anxious: see! behold!" — This clamant word  
 Broke through the careful silence; for they heard 495  
 A rustling noise of leaves, and out there flutter'd  
 Pigeons and doves: Adonis something mutter'd,  
 The while one hand, that erst upon his thigh  
 Lay dormant, mov'd convuls'd and gradually  
 Up to his forehead. Then there was a hum 500  
 Of sudden voices, echoing, "Come! come!  
 Arise! awake! Clear summer has forth walk'd  
 Unto the clover-sward, and she has talk'd  
 Full soothingly to every nested finch:  
 Rise, Cupids! or we'll give the blue-bell pinch 505  
 To your dimpled arms. Once more sweet life begin!"  
 At this, from every side they hurried in,

482) In the draft,

Over this paly corse, the crystal shower...

487) The draft reads *These* for *Us*, and in the next two lines *winter* for *slumber* and *complishing* for *filling up*.

489) The finished manuscript reads *E'en* for *Even*.

490) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *o'er* for *with*.

491) The draft has *sweet prologue* in place of *warm firstling*.

495) Cancelled manuscript reading, *and they heard*.

501) In the draft,

Of sudden voices, echoing out, "Come! come!

504) The draft reads *Most* for *Full*.

505) Cancelled readings, — in the draft,

Cupids awake! or black and blue we'll pinch  
 Your dimpled arms — for lo! your Queen, your Queen.

d in the finished copy,

Cupids awake! or black and blue we'll pinch  
 Your dimpled arms. Once more sweet life begin!

Rubbing their sleepy eyes with lazy wrists,  
 And doubling over head their little fists  
 In backward yawns. But all were soon alive : 510  
 For as delicious wine doth, sparkling, dive  
 In nectar'd clouds and curls through water fair,  
 So from the arbour roof down swell'd an air  
 Odorous and enlivening; making all  
 To laugh, and play, and sing, and loudly call 515  
 For their sweet queen : when lo ! the wreathed green  
 Disparted, and far upward could be seen  
 Blue heaven, and a silver car, air-borne,  
 Whose silent wheels, fresh wet from clouds of morn,  
 Spun off a drizzling dew, — which falling chill 520  
 On soft Adonis' shoulders, made him still  
 Nestle and turn uneasily about.  
 Soon were the white doves plain, with neck stretch'd out,  
 And silken traces lighten'd in descent ;  
 And soon, returning from love's banishment, 525  
 Queen Venus leaning downward open arm'd :  
 Her shadow fell upon his breast, and charm'd

(509) The draft reads *in the air for over head.*

(523) In the draft thus —

Anon the doves { appear'd } , with necks stretch'd out.  
                                   { were plain }

A tumult to his heart, and a new life  
 Into his eyes. Ah, miserable strife,  
 But for her comforting! unhappy sight, 530  
 But meeting her blue orbs! Who, who can write  
 Of these first minutes? The unchariest muse  
 To embracements warm as theirs makes coy excuse.

O it has ruffled every spirit there,  
 Saving Love's self, who stands superb to share 535  
 The general gladness: awfully he stands;  
 A sovereign quell is in his waving hands;  
 No sight can bear the lightning of his bow;  
 His quiver is mysterious, none can know  
 What themselves think of it; from forth his eyes 540  
 There darts strange light of varied hues and dies:  
 A scowl is sometimes on his brow, but who  
 Look full upon it feel anon the blue  
 Of his fair eyes run liquid through their souls.  
 Endymion feels it, and no more controls 545  
 The burning prayer within him; so, bent low,  
 He had begun a plaining of his woe.  
 But Venus, bending forward, said: "My child,  
 Favour this gentle youth; his days are wild  
 With love — he — but alas! too well I see 550  
 Thou know'st the deepness of his misery.  
 Ah, smile not so, my son: I tell thee true,  
 That when through heavy hours I us'd to rue  
 The endless sleep of this new-born Adon',  
 This stranger aye I pitied. For upon 555

---

That they are met is poetry enough.

O this has ruffled every spirit there,...

These lines are struck out of the draft, where their place is not supplied; but the finished copy corresponds with the printed text.

(535) In the first edition, *love's*, with a small *l*; but *Love's* in the manuscript.

(538) In the finished manuscript this line stands thus —

His bow no sight can bear for lightning so.

(541) The draft reads first *sundry* and then *changeful* in place of *varied*. The first edition reads *dyes*: but in the finished manuscript we have *dies* instead of *dyes*: I am pretty confident this is right; and it is to be regretted that Woodhouse did not record which of the two words was in the draft. Keats was not incapable of applying the word *dyes* to light; but there is redundancy in *light of varied hues and dyes*; and the notion of strange light flashing from Love's eyes and dying is in a far higher strain.

(548) The draft reads *leaning* for *bending*.

(552) In the draft *sweet boy!* instead of *my son*, and in the next line but one *mad-brain'd* for *new-born*.

A dreary morning once I fled away  
Into the breezy clouds, to weep and pray  
For this my love: for vexing Mars had teas'd  
Me even to tears: thence, when a little eas'd,  
Down-looking, vacant, through a hazy wood, 560  
I saw this youth as he despairing stood:  
Those same dark curls blown vagrant in the wind;  
Those same full fringed lids a constant blind  
Over his sullen eyes: I saw him throw  
Himself on wither'd leaves, even as though 565  
Death had come sudden; for no jot he mov'd,  
Yet mutter'd wildly. I could hear he lov'd  
Some fair immortal, and that his embrace  
Had zon'd her through the night. There is no trace  
Of this in heaven: I have mark'd each cheek, 570  
And find it is the vainest thing to seek;  
And that of all things 'tis kept secretest.  
Endymion! one day thou wilt be blest:  
So still obey the guiding hand that fends  
Thee safely through these wonders for sweet ends. 575  
'Tis a concealment needful in extreme;  
And if I guess'd not so, the sunny beam  
Thou shouldst mount up to with me. Now adieu!  
Here must we leave thee." — At these words upflew

For all those visions were o'ergone, and past,  
 And he in loneliness: he felt assur'd 590  
 Of happy times, when all he had endur'd  
 Would seem a feather to the mighty prize.  
 So, with unusual gladness, on he hies  
 Through caves, and palaces of mottled ore,  
 Gold dome, and crystal wall, and turquoise floor, 595  
 Black polish'd porticos of awful shade,  
 And, at the last, a diamond balustrade,  
 Leading afar past wild magnificence,  
 Spiral through ruggedest loopholes, and thence  
 Stretching across a void, then guiding o'er 600  
 Enormous chasms, where, all foam and roar,  
 Streams subterranean tease their granite beds;  
 Then heighten'd just above the silvery heads  
 Of a thousand fountains, so that he could dash  
 The waters with his spear; but at the splash, 605  
 Done heedlessly, those spouting columns rose  
 Sudden a poplar's height, and 'gan to enclose  
 His diamond path with fretwork, streaming round  
 Alive, and dazzling cool, and with a sound,  
 Haply, like dolphin tumults, when sweet shells 610  
 Welcome the float of Thetis. Long he dwells

(589) We are to understand *that after For*, the sense being doubtless that Endymion did not rave and stare on account of the departure of the visions, and not that the departure of the visions was a sufficient cause for his not raving and staring. Line 590 originally began with *Leaving him solitary*.

(592) The draft reads *joy for prize*.

(596) Compare *Sleep and Poetry*, lines 75-6, page 91:

and where I found a spot

Of awfuller shade.

(597-600) The draft reads —

Then diamond steps and ruby balustrade  
 Leading to fierce and wild magnificence  
 Spiral by ruggedest loopholes, and thence  
 Stretching across a void, then leading o'er...

(602) In the draft we have

Streams subterranean { rage in } granite beds;  
   { wear their }

and *hundred for thousand* in the next line but one.

(606) The draft reads *He playfully made* in place of *Done heedlessly*.

(607) In the finished manuscript, *'gan enclose*; but *'gan to enclose* in the first edition.

(608) In the draft we read

His mid-air path with fretwork, quivering round...

and in the next line but one *loud for sweet*. We must conclude the poet chose, for Thetis' sweet sake, to subdue into sweetness the orthodox clamour of the conchs blown at her approach over the sea.



On this delight ; for, every minute's space,  
 The streams with changed magic interlace :  
 Sometimes like delicatest lattices,  
 Cover'd with crystal vines ; then weeping trees, 615  
 Moving about as in a gentle wind,  
 Which, in a wink, to watery gauze refin'd,  
 Pour'd into shapes of curtain'd canopies,  
 Spangled, and rich with liquid broideries  
 Of flowers, peacocks, swans, and naiads fair. 620  
 Swifter than lightning went these wonders rare ;  
 And then the water, into stubborn streams  
 Collecting, mimick'd the wrought oaken beams,  
 Pillars, and frieze, and high fantastic roof,  
 Of those dusk places in times far aloof 625  
 Cathedrals call'd. He bade a loth farewell  
 To these founts Protean, passing gulph, and dell,  
 And torrent, and ten thousand jutting shapes,  
 Half seen through deepest gloom, and griesly gapes,  
 Blackening on every side, and overhead 630  
 A vaulted dome like Heaven's, far bespread  
 With starlight gems : aye, all so huge and strange,  
 The solitary felt a hurried change  
 Working within him into something dreary, —  
 Vex'd like a morning eagle, lost, and weary. 635

me mother Cybele! alone — alone — 640  
 sombre chariot; dark foldings thrown  
 out her majesty, and front death-pale,  
 with turrets crown'd. Four maned lions hale  
 the sluggish wheels; solemn their toothed maws,  
 their surly eyes brow-hidden, heavy paws 645  
 uplifted drowsily, and nery tails  
 covering their tawny brushes. Silent sails  
 his shadowy queen athwart, and faints away  
 another gloomy arch.

Wherefore delay,  
 young traveller, in such a mournful place? 650  
 dost thou wayworn, or canst not further trace  
 the diamond path? And does it indeed end  
 abrupt in middle air? Yet earthward bend  
 thy forehead, and to Jupiter cloud-borne  
 call ardently! He was indeed wayworn; 655  
 abrupt, in middle air, his way was lost;  
 and cloud-borne Jove he bowed, and there crost

2-7) In the original draft, there were seven lines in place of the six of the  
 thus —

About her majesty, and her pale brow  
 With turrets crown'd, which forward heavily bow  
 Weighing her chin to the breast. Four lions draw  
 The wheels in sluggish time — each toothed maw  
 Shut patiently — eyes hid in tawny veils —  
 Drooping about their paws, and nery tails  
 Covering their tufted brushes to the dust.

These were crossed out; and the passage, revised so as to approach the final text,  
 inserted thus —

About her majesty, and front death-pale  
 With turrets crown'd. Four tawny lions hale  
 The sluggish wheels; solemn their { closed } maws  
 Their surly eyes half shut, their heavy paws  
 Uplifted lazily, and nery tails  
 Vailing their tawny tufts.

8) The finished manuscript the passage was written precisely as in the printed text,  
 but that *sleepily* was written in line 646 and then struck out in favour of *drowsily*.

9) *Into* is here struck out in the finished manuscript, and *In* substituted.

7) In the original draft the supernatural machinery for this transit was entirely  
 omitted, thus —

To cloudborne Jove he bent: and there was tost  
 Into his grasping hands a silken cord  
 At which without a single impious word  
 He swung upon it off into the gloom.  
 Down, down, uncertain to what pleasant doom,  
 Dropt like a fathoming plummet, down he fell  
 Through unknown things; till &c.

Towards him a large eagle, 'twixt whose wings,  
 Without one impious word, himself he flings,  
 Committed to the darkness and the gloom: 660  
 Down, down, uncertain to what pleasant doom,  
 Swift as a fathoming plummet down he fell  
 Through unknown things; till exhal'd asphodel,  
 And rose, with spicy fannings interbreath'd,  
 Came swelling forth where little caves were wreath'd 665  
 So thick with leaves and mosses, that they seem'd  
 Large honey-combs of green, and freshly teem'd  
 With airs delicious. In the greenest nook  
 The eagle landed him, and farewell took.

It was a jasmine bower, all bestrown 670  
 With golden moss. His every sense had grown  
 Ethereal for pleasure; 'bove his head  
 Flew a delight half-graspable; his tread  
 Was Hesperian; to his capable ears  
 Silence was music from the holy spheres; 675  
 A dewy luxury was in his eyes;  
 The little flowers felt his pleasant sighs  
 And stirr'd them faintly. Verdant cave and cell  
 He wander'd through, oft wondering at such swell  
 Of sudden exaltation: but, "Alas!" 680

Without an echo? Then shall I be left  
 So sad, so melancholy, so bereft! 685  
 Yet still I feel immortal! O my love,  
 My breath of life, where art thou? High above,  
 Dancing before the morning gates of heaven?  
 Or keeping watch among those starry seven,  
 Old Atlas' children? Art a maid of the waters, 690  
 One of shell-winding Triton's bright-hair'd daughters?  
 Or art, impossible! a nymph of Dian's,  
 Weaving a coronal of tender scions  
 For very idleness? Where'er thou art,  
 Methinks it now is at my will to start 695  
 Into thine arms; to scare Aurora's train,  
 And snatch thee from the morning; o'er the main  
 To scud like a wild bird, and take thee off  
 From thy sea-foamy cradle; or to doff  
 Thy shepherd vest, and woo thee mid fresh leaves. 700  
 No, no, too eagerly my soul deceives  
 Its powerless self: I know this cannot be.  
 O let me then by some sweet dreaming flee  
 To her entrancements: hither sleep awhile!  
 Hither most gentle sleep! and soothing foil 705  
 For some few hours the coming solitude."

Thus spake he, and that moment felt endu'd  
 With power to dream deliciously; so wound

(684) The draft reads *As I shall be left...*

(685) Compare the Sonnet *On a Dream* —

So play'd, so charm'd, so conquer'd, so bereft...

(687-90) Endymion conjectures whether his unknown love is one of the Hours, or one of the nymph Pleione's daughters by Atlas, transferred to heaven as the Pleiades. The draft reads *the starry seven*, and *Art a nymph of the waters*. The finished manuscript has *Art a maid o' the waters*.

(691-2) According to the draft,

One of shell-winding Triton's floating daughters?  
 Art thou, impossible! a maid of Dian's,...

(697) In the draft the passage originally stood thus: —

And snatch thee from among them; to attain  
 The starry heights and find thee ere a breath...

as if the intention had been to refer again to the fourfold conjecture instead of only three of its aspects.

(698) The draft reads *skim for scud*.

(701-2) In the draft,

But ah! too eagerly my soul deceives  
 Its mortal self: O since this cannot be,...

(706) The draft reads *With thy quick magic for For some few hours*.

Through a dim passage, searching till he found  
 The smoothest mossy bed and deepest, where 710  
 He threw himself, and just into the air  
 Stretching his indolent arms, he took, O bliss!  
 A naked waist: "Fair Cupid, whence is this?"  
 A well-known voice sigh'd, "Sweetest, here am I!"  
 At which soft ravishment, with dotting cry 715  
 They trembled to each other. — Helicon!  
 O fountain'd hill! Old Homer's Helicon!  
 That thou wouldst spout a little streamlet o'er  
 These sorry pages; then the verse would soar  
 And sing above this gentle pair, like lark 720  
 Over his nested young: but all is dark  
 Around thine aged top, and thy clear fount  
 Exhales in mists to heaven. Aye, the count  
 Of mighty Poets is made up; the scroll  
 Is folded by the Muses; the bright roll 725  
 Is in Apollo's hand: our dazed eyes  
 Have seen a new tinge in the western skies:  
 The world has done its duty. Yet, oh yet,  
 Although the sun of poesy is set,  
 These lovers did embrace, and we must weep 730  
 That there is no old power left to steep  
 A quill immortal in their joyous tears.

" O known Unknown! from whom my being sips,  
 Such darling essence, wherefore may I not 740  
 Be ever in these arms? in this sweet spot  
 Pillow my chin for ever? ever press  
 These toying hands and kiss their smooth excess?  
 Why not for ever and for ever feel  
 That breath about my eyes? Ah, thou wilt steal 745  
 Away from me again, indeed, indeed —  
 Thou wilt be gone away, and wilt not heed  
 My lonely madness. Speak, delicious fair!  
 Is — is it to be so? No! Who will dare  
 To pluck thee from me? And, of thine own will, 750  
 Full well I feel thou wouldst not leave me. Still  
 Let me entwine thee surer, surer — now  
 How can we part? Elysium! who art thou?  
 Who, that thou canst not be for ever here,  
 Or lift me with thee to some starry sphere? 755  
 Enchantress! tell me by this soft embrace,  
 By the most soft completion of thy face,  
 Those lips, O slippery blisses, twinkling eyes,  
 And by these tenderest, milky sovereignties —  
 These tenderest, and by the nectar-wine, 760  
 The passion " ——— " O dov'd Ida the divine!

(739) Compare, for mere juxtaposition of words, *Romeo and Juliet*, Act I, Scene v, line 141 —

Too early seen unknown, and known too late!

(743) The draft reads *languid* for *toying*.

(747-8) Woodhouse notes, apparently from the draft, the variation,

And there must be a time when thou'lt not heed

My lonely madness — O delicious { maid }  
 fair }.

The finished manuscript and the first edition both read *my kindest fair!* But the version of the text is from the corrected copy.

(749) In the draft, *What will dare*, and in the next line but one *I know — I feel*.

(756-7) The draft gives this couplet thus

Enchantress! tell me by this mad embrace,  
 By the moist languor of thy breathing face...

(760-1) The draft has this couplet as follows —

These tenderest — and by the breath — the love  
 The passion — nectar — Heaven! " — " Jove above!

The second of these lines originally stood in the finished manuscript thus —

The Passion — — — " O Ida the divine!

as if *passion* were meant to scan as a trisyllable, as in many other cases of similar words in *Endymion*, — *ambrosial* for instance in line 810; *Endymion* in lines 823 and 855 of this book; and *intoxication* in line 502 of Book I; but Keats has inserted before *Ida* the word *dov'd*, not *lov'd* as in the first edition,

Endymion! dearest! Ah, unhappy me!  
 His soul will 'scape us — O felicity!  
 How he does love me! His poor temples beat  
 To the very tune of love — how sweet, sweet, sweet. 765  
 Revive, dear youth, or I shall faint and die;  
 Revive, or these soft hours will hurry by  
 In tranced dulness; speak, and let that spell  
 Affright this lethargy! I cannot quell  
 Its heavy pressure, and will press at least 770  
 My lips to thine, that they may richly feast  
 Until we taste the life of love again.  
 What! dost thou move? dost kiss? O bliss! O pain!  
 I love thee, youth, more than I can conceive;  
 And so long absence from thee doth bereave 775  
 My soul of any rest: yet must I hence:  
 Yet, can I not to starry eminence  
 Uplift thee; nor for very shame can own  
 Myself to thee: Ah, dearest, do not groan  
 Or thou wilt force me from this secrecy, 780  
 And I must blush in heaven. O that I  
 Had done 't already; that the dreadful smiles  
 At my lost brightness, my impassion'd wiles,  
 Had waned from Olympus' solemn height,  
 And from all serious Gods; that our delight 785

In reverence veiled — my crystalline dominion  
 Half lost, and all old hymns made nullity!  
 But what is this to love? O I could fly 795  
 With thee into the ken of heavenly powers,  
 So thou wouldst thus, for many sequent hours,  
 Press me so sweetly. Now I swear at once  
 That I am wise, that Pallas is a dunce —  
 Perhaps her love like mine is but unknown — 800  
 O I do think that I have been alone  
 In chastity: yes, Pallas has been sighing,  
 While every eve saw me my hair uptying  
 With fingers cool as aspen leaves. Sweet love,  
 I was as vague as solitary dove, 805  
 Nor knew that nests were built. Now a soft kiss—  
 Aye, by that kiss, I vow an endless bliss,  
 An immortality of passion's thine:  
 Ere long I will exalt thee to the shine  
 Of heaven ambrosial; and we will shade 810  
 Ourselves whole summers by a river glade;  
 And I will tell thee stories of the sky,  
 And breathe thee whispers of its minstrelsy.  
 My happy love will overwing all bounds!  
 O let me melt into thee; let the sounds 815

(793) In the first edition (and as far as I know all others) *veiled*, but *veiled* in the manuscript, which is obviously right.

(796) The draft reads *starry* for *heavenly*.

(800) In the draft,

Does Pallas self not love? she must — she must!

(807) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *swear* for *vow*.

(813-14) The draft has these two lines thus —

And breathe thee empyrean minstrelsy.  
 O my mad love } will overwing all bounds!  
 My maddened love }

(815-29) This passage varies considerably in detail from what was originally written in the draft: —

let the sounds  
 Of both our voices marry at their birth;  
 Let us entwine inextricably —  
 O dearth of mortal words! I'll teach thee other speech;  
 Lispings immortal will I sometime teach  
 Thine honied tongue — Gold-breathings, which I gasp  
 To have thee understand, now while I clasp  
 Thee thus, and shed these { tears } — I am pain'd,  
 drops }  
 Endymion. There is a grief contain'd  
 In the very shrine of pleasure, O my life!  
 Hereat with fainting sobs her gentle strife  
 Died into passive languor — he return'd



Of our close voices marry at their birth ;  
 Let us entwine hoveringly — O dearth  
 Of human words! roughness of mortal speech!  
 Lispings empyrean will I sometime teach  
 Thine honied tongue — lute-breathings, which I gasp 820  
 To have thee understand, now while I clasp  
 Thee thus, and weep for fondness — I am pain'd,  
 Endymion: woe! woe! is grief contain'd  
 In the very deeps of pleasure, my sole life? " —  
 Hereat, with many sobs, her gentle strife 825  
 Melted into a languor. He return'd  
 Entranced vows and tears.

Ye who have yearn'd  
 With too much passion, will here stay and pity,  
 For the mere sake of truth; as 'tis a ditty  
 Not of these days, but long ago 'twas told 830  
 By a cavern wind unto a forest old;  
 And then the forest told it in a dream  
 To a sleeping lake, whose cool and level gleam  
 A poet caught as he was journeying  
 To Phæbus' shrine; and in it he did fling 835  
 His weary limbs, bathing an hour's space,  
 And after, straight in that inspired place

Should be engulfed in the eddy wind.  
 As much as here is penn'd doth always find  
 A resting place, thus much comes clear and plain ;  
 Anon the strange voice is upon the wane —  
 And 'tis but echo'd from departing sound, 850  
 That the fair visitant at last unwound  
 Her gentle limbs, and left the youth asleep. —  
 Thus the tradition of the gusty deep.

Now turn we to our former chroniclers. —  
 Endymion awoke, that grief of hers 855

(849-50) The draft reads —

But after the strange voice is on the wane —  
 And 't is but guess'd from the departing sound,

and in the next line but one *prison'd* for *gentle*. The two lines as written in the draft make it more absolutely clear than the two lines as printed that the departure of Diana is divined from the faintly sounding close of the story to which the poet gave voice. The birth of this tale out-does in imaginative delicacy the account of the "sleepy music" in this Book (lines 358 to 363), though that exceeds this in compactness. Keats probably felt that there was quite enough about the poet's voice, for unless I am much deceived he rejected a most lovely and elaborate series of comparisons for that voice, — only inferior, if indeed they are inferior, to the "tradition of the gusty deep" which they would have followed immediately — thus :

Oh! what a voice is silent. It was soft  
 As mountain-echoes, when the winds aloft  
 (The gentle winds of summer) meet in caves ;  
 Or when in sheltered places the white waves  
 Are 'waken'd into music, as the breeze  
 Dimples and stems the current : or as trees  
 Shaking their green locks in the days of June :  
 Or Delphic girls when to the maiden moon  
 They sang harmonious pray'rs : or sounds that come  
 (However near) like a faint distant hum  
 Out of the grass, from which mysterious birth  
 We guess the busy secrets of the earth.  
 — Like the low voice of Syrinx, when she ran  
 Into the forests from Arcadian Pan :  
 Or sad CEnone's, when she pined away  
 For Paris, or (and yet 'twas not so gay)  
 As Helen's whisper when she came to Troy,  
 Half sham'd to wander with that blooming boy.  
 Like air-touch'd harps in flowery casements hung ;  
 Like unto lovers' ears the wild words sung  
 In garden bowers at twilight : like the sound  
 Of Zephyr when he takes his nightly round  
 In May, to see, the roses all asleep :  
 Or like the dim strain which along the deep  
 The sea-maid utters to the sailors' ear,  
 Telling of tempests, or of dangers near.  
 Like Desdemona, who (when fear was strong  
 Upon her soul) chaunted the willow song,

Sweet paining on his ear: he sickly guess'd  
 How lone he was once more, and sadly press'd  
 His empty arms together, hung his head,  
 And most forlorn upon that widow'd bed  
 Sat silently. Love's madness he had known: 860  
 Often with more than tortured lion's groan  
 Moanings had burst from him; but now that rage  
 Had pass'd away: no longer did he wage  
 A rough-voic'd war against the dooming stars.  
 No, he had felt too much for such harsh jars: 865  
 The lyre of his soul Æolian tun'd  
 Forgot all violence, and but commun'd  
 With melancholy thought: O he had swoon'd  
 Drunken from pleasure's nipple; and his love  
 Henceforth was dove-like. — Loth was he to move 870  
 From the imprinted couch, and when he did,  
 'Twas with slow, languid paces, and face hid  
 In muffling hands. So temper'd, out he stray'd

---

Swan-like before she perish'd: or the tone  
 Of flutes upon the waters heard alone:  
 Like words that come upon the memory  
 Spoken by friends departed; or the sigh  
 A gentle girl breathes when she tries to hide  
 The love her eyes betray to all beside.

Half seeing visions that might have dismay'd Alecto's serpents; ravishments more keen	875
Than Hermes' pipe, when anxious he did lean Over eclipsing eyes: and at the last It was a sounding grotto, vaulted, vast, O'er studded with a thousand, thousand pearls, And crimson mouthed shells with stubborn curls,	880
Of, every shape and size, even to the bulk In which whales harbour close, to brood and sulk Against an endless storm. Moreover too, Fish-semblances, of green and azure hue, Ready to snort their streams. In this cool wonder	885
Endymion sat down, and 'gan to ponder On all his life: his youth, up to the day When 'mid acclaim, and feasts, and garlands gay, He stept upon his shepherd throne: the look Of his white palace in wild forest nook,	890
And all the revels he had lorded there: Each tender maiden whom he once thought fair, With every friend and fellow-woodlander — Pass'd like a dream before him. Then the spur Of the old bards to mighty deeds: his plans	895
To nurse the golden age 'mong shepherd clans: That wondrous night: the great Pan-festival: His sister's sorrow; and his wanderings all, Until into the earth's deep maw he rush'd: Then all its buried magic, till it flush'd	900

(876) The words *those of* are cancelled in the finished manuscript before *Hermes's* (not *Hermes'*). The story of Argus seems to have impressed Keats vividly: see his sonnet, "As Hermes once took to his feathers light." Probably this vivid impression was derived from Cary's Dante (*Purgatory*, Canto XXXII), which he certainly read attentively, and on the fly-leaf of which, by the bye, he wrote that very sonnet. He may also have known the story in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (Book I).

(878) The draft reads *He found* for *It was*.

(879) *And* is here cancelled in favour of *O'er* in the finished manuscript.

(880) In the draft —

And shells outswelling their faint tinged curls.

(881) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *hue* for *shape*.

(882) In the finished manuscript and in the first edition *arbour*; but although this might have a very far-fetched sense, I do not think it would be justifiable to restore the reading.

(884) The draft reads *green and golden hue*.

(895) The draft reads *minstrelsy* instead of *the old bards*.

(897) Cancelled readings from the draft —

That wondrous night that wean'd him...

That wondrous night: great Pan's high festival.

(899) The draft reads *dim* for *deep*.

High with excessive love. "And now," thought he,  
 "How long must I remain in jeopardy  
 Of blank amazements that amaze no more?  
 Now I have tasted her sweet soul to the core  
 All other depths are shallow: essences, 905  
 Once spiritual, are like muddy lees,  
 Meant but to fertilize my earthly root,  
 And make my branches lift a golden fruit  
 Into the bloom of heaven: other light,  
 Though it be quick and sharp enough to blight 910  
 The Olympian eagle's vision, is dark,  
 Dark as the parentage of chaos. Hark!  
 My silent thoughts are echoing from these shells;  
 Or they are but the ghosts, the dying swells  
 Of noises far away? — list!" — Hereupon 915  
 He kept an anxious ear. The humming tone  
 Came louder, and behold, there as he lay,  
 On either side outgush'd, with misty spray,  
 A copious spring; and both together dash'd  
 Swift, mad, fantastic round the rocks, and lash'd 920  
 Among the conchs and shells of the lofty grot,  
 Leaving a trickling dew. At last they shot  
 Down from the ceiling's height, pouring a noise  
 As of some breathless racers whose hopes poize

Such tenderness as mine? Great Dian, why,  
 Why didst thou hear her prayer? O that I  
 Were rippling round her dainty fairness now,  
 Circling about her waist, and striving how  
 To entice her to a dive! then stealing in  
 Between her luscious lips and eyelids thin.  
 O that her shining hair was in the sun,  
 And I distilling from it thence to run  
 In amorous rillets down her shrinking form!  
 To linger on her lilly shoulders, warm  
 Between her kissing breasts, and every charm  
 Touch raptur'd! — See how painfully I flow:  
 Fair maid, be pitiful to my great woe.  
 Stay, stay thy weary course, and let me lead,  
 A happy wooer, to the flowery mead  
 Where all that beauty snar'd me." — "Cruel god,  
 Desist! or my offended mistress' nod  
 Will stagnate all thy fountains: — tease me not  
 With syren words — Ah, have I really got  
 Such power to madden thee? And is it true —  
 Away, away, or I shall dearly rue  
 My very thoughts: in mercy then away,  
 Kindest Alpheus, for should I obey  
 My own dear will, 'twould be a deadly bane.  
 O, Oread-Queen! would that thou hadst a pain  
 Like this of mine, then would I fearless turn  
 And be a criminal. Alas, I burn,  
 I shudder — gentle river, get thee hence.  
 Alpheus! thou enchanter! every sense

(945) The draft reads —

Amorous and slow adown her shrinking form!

(947-9) These three lines stood thus in the draft —

About her { pouting } breasts, and every charm  
                   { budding }

Kiss, raptur'd, even to her milky toes.

O foolish maid be gentle to my woes.

(952) The draft reads *slew* for *snar'd*.

(954) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *waters* for *fountains*.

(960) In the first edition Arethusa's speech is closed at the end of this line, and taken up again at *Alas, I burn*, in line 363, the intermediate portion being separated from it by independent marks of quotation, as if spoken by Alpheus; but in the manuscript the one speech extends from *Cruel God* (952) to *cruel thing* (975); and this obviously correct arrangement is restored in the copy revised by Keats.

(964) The draft reads —

I shudder — for sweet mercy get thee hence.

Of mine was once made perfect in these woods.  
 Fresh breezes, bowery lawns, and innocent floods,  
 Ripe fruits, and lonely couch, contentment gave;  
 But ever since I heedlessly did lave  
 In thy deceitful stream, a panting glow 970  
 Grew strong within me: wherefore serve me so,  
 And call it love? Alas, 'twas cruelty.  
 Not once more did I close my happy eye  
 Amid the thrushes' song. Away! Avaunt!  
 O 'twas a cruel thing." — "Now thou dost taunt 975  
 So softly, Arethusa, that I think  
 If thou wast playing on my shady brink,  
 Thou wouldst bathe once again. Innocent maid!  
 Stifle thine heart no more; nor be afraid  
 Of angry powers: there are deities 980  
 Will shade us with their wings. Those fitful sighs  
 'Tis almost death to hear: O let me pour  
 A dewy balm upon them! — fear no more,  
 Sweet Arethusa! Dian's self must feel  
 Sometime these very pangs. Dear maiden, steal 985  
 Blushing into my soul, and let us fly  
 These dreary caverns for the open sky.  
 I will delight thee all my winding course,  
 From the green sea up to my hidden source

Than Saturn in his exile ; where I brim  
 Round flowery islands, and take thence a skim 995  
 Of mealy sweets, which myriads of bees  
 Buzz from their honey'd wings : and thou shouldst please  
 Thyself to choose the richest, where we might  
 Be incense-pillow'd every summer night.  
 Doff all sad fears, thou white deliciousness, 1000  
 And let us be thus comforted ; unless  
 Thou couldst rejoice to see my hopeless stream  
 Hurry distracted from Sol's temperate beam,  
 And pour to death along some hungry sands." —  
 " What can I do, Alpheus ? Dian stands 1005  
 Severe before me : persecuting fate !  
 Unhappy Arethusa ! thou wast late  
 A huntress free in " — At this, sudden fell  
 Those two sad streams adown a fearful dell.  
 The Latmian listen'd, but he heard no more, 1010  
 Save echo, faint repeating o'er and o'er  
 The name of Arethusa. On the verge  
 Of that dark gulph he wept, and said : " I urge  
 Thee, gentle Goddess of my pilgrimage,  
 By our eternal hopes, to soothe, to assuage, 1015  
 If thou art powerful, these lovers' pains ;  
 And make them happy in some happy plains."

He turn'd — there was a whelming sound — he stept,  
 There was a cooler light ; and so he kept  
 Towards it by a sandy path, and lo ! 1020  
 More suddenly than doth a moment go,  
 The visions of the earth were gone and fled —  
 He saw the giant sea above his head.

(996) The draft reads *powdery* for *mealy*.

(997) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *Shake* for *Buzz*.

(998) In the draft, *choose the freshest*.

(1004) The draft reads *along hot Afric's sands*, and in the next line but one *cruel, cruel fate!*

(1016) *Lovers* in the manuscript and in the first edition, without the apostrophe ; and the speech is not closed with a mark of quotation in either.

(1017) The draft reads *their native plains*.

(1020) Cancelled reading of the finished manuscript, *scanty* for *sandy*.



## ENDYMION.

### BOOK III.

THERE are who lord it o'er their fellow-men  
With most prevailing tinsel : who unpen  
Their baaing vanities, to browse away  
The comfortable green and juicy hay  
From human pastures ; or, O torturing fact !  
Who, through an idiot blink, will see unpack'd  
Fire-branded foxes to sear up and singe  
Our gold and ripe-ear'd hopes. With not one tinge  
Of sanctuary splendour, not a sight  
Able to face an owl's, they still are dight  
By the blear-eyed nations in empurpled vests,  
And crowns, and turbans. With unladen breasts,  
Some of them, self-enveloped, their usually moist

5  
10

Or by ethereal things that, unconfin'd, 25  
 Can make a ladder of the eternal wind,  
 And poise about in cloudy thunder-tents  
 To watch the abysm-birth of elements.  
 Aye, 'bove the withering of old-lipp'd Fate  
 A thousand Powers keep religious state, 30  
 In water, fiery realm, and airy bourne;  
 And, silent as a consecrated urn,  
 Hold spherey sessions for a season due.  
 Yet few of these far majesties, ah, few!  
 Have bar'd their operations to this globe — 35  
 Few, who with gorgeous pageantry enrobe  
 Our piece of heaven — whose benevolence  
 Shakes hand with our own Ceres; every sense  
 Filling with spiritual sweets to plenitude,  
 As bees gorge full their cells. And, by the feud 40  
 'Twixt Nothing and Creation, I here swear,  
 Eterne Apollo! that thy Sister fair  
 Is of all these the gentlier-mightiest.  
 When thy gold breath is misting in the west,  
 She unobserved steals unto her throne, 45  
 And there she sits most meek and most alone;  
 As if she had not pomp subservient;  
 As if thine eye, high Poet! was not bent  
 Towards her with the Muses in thine heart;  
 As if the ministring stars kept not apart, 50

---

(31-2) The draft yields the rejected couplet —

In the several vastnesses of air and fire;  
 And silent, as a corpse upon a pyre.

(34) The draft reads

How few of these far majesties, how few!

(38-9) These two lines stood thus in the draft —

Salutes our native Ceres — { and each } sense  
   { every }  
 With spiritual honey fills to plenitude...

(41) At the end of this line Keats wrote in the original draft, as if to localize the oath he was recording, "Oxford, Sept. 5."

(42) The word *eterne* seems to be another reminiscence of Spenser: see *Faerie Queene*, Book III, Canto vi, Stanza 47:

Yet is eterne in mutabilitie,...

(44) The draft reads —

When thy gold hair falls thick about the west.

(49) The draft has *Upon* in place of *Towards*.

(50) This attribution of an active life of ministration to the stars is a recurrence of the idea in Book II, lines 184-5 —

  by all the stars  
 That tend thy bidding...

Waiting for silver-footed messages.  
 O Moon! the oldest shades 'mong oldest trees  
 Feel palpitations when thou lookest in :  
 O Moon! old boughs lisp forth a holier din  
 The while they feel thine airy fellowship. 55  
 Thou dost bless every where, with silver lip  
 Kissing dead things to life. The sleeping kine,  
 Couch'd in thy brightness, dream of fields divine :  
 Innumerable mountains rise, and rise,  
 Ambitious for the hallowing of thine eyes ; 60  
 And yet thy benediction passeth not  
 One obscure hiding-place, one little spot  
 Where pleasure may be sent : the nested wren  
 Has thy fair face within its tranquil ken,  
 And from beneath a sheltering ivy leaf 65  
 Takes glimpses of thee ; thou art a relief  
 To the poor patient oyster, where it sleeps  
 Within its pearly house. — The mighty deeps,  
 The monstrous sea is thine — the myriad sea !  
 O Moon ! far-spooming Ocean bows to thee, 70  
 And Tellus feels his forehead's cumbrous load.

(52) In the draft,

Waiting the oldest shadows { 'mong } old trees.

Cynthia! where art thou now? What far abode  
 Of green or silvery bower doth enshrine  
 Such utmost beauty? Alas, thou dost pine  
 For one as sorrowful: thy cheek is pale 75  
 For one whose cheek is pale: thou dost bewail  
 His tears, who weeps for thee. Where dost thou sigh?  
 Ah! surely that light peeps from Vesper's eye,  
 Or what a thing is love! 'Tis She, but lo!  
 How chang'd, how full of ache, how gone in woe! 80  
 She dies at the thinnest cloud; her loveliness  
 Is wan on Neptune's blue: yet there's a stress  
 Of love-spangles, just off yon cape of trees,  
 Dancing upon the waves, as if to please  
 The curly foam with amorous influence. 85  
 O, not so idle: for down-glancing thence  
 She fathoms eddies, and runs wild about  
 O'erwhelming water-courses; scaring out  
 The thorny sharks from hiding-holes, and fright'ning  
 Their savage eyes with unaccustom'd lightning. 90  
 Where will the splendour be content to reach?  
 O love! how potent hast thou been to teach  
 Strange journeyings! Wherever beauty dwells,  
 In gulph or aerie, mountains or deep dells,  
 In light, in gloom, in star or blazing sun, 95  
 Thou pointest out the way, and straight 'tis won.  
 Amid his toil thou gav'st Leander breath;  
 Thou leddest Orpheus through the gleams of death;  
 Thou madest Pluto bear thin element;

(74) Cancelled reading of the draft, *Thine* for *Such*.

(77-8) In the draft there was a false rhyme here, seen and remedied in copying out:

Where art thou Ah  
 Surely that light is from the Evening star...

(86-7) The draft shows more than one tentative for this passage, thus:

Nor { *stays it* } the idleness — but glancing thence...

Nor cradled idly — but down glancing thence...

Yet not so idle — for down glancing thence

It mingles and starts about unfathomed...

(89-90) In the draft this couplet reads —

Enormous sharks from hiding-holes, and fright'ning  
 The whale's large eyes with unaccustomed lightning.

(94-95) The draft reads thus —

In air, or living flame — or magic shells,  
 In earth, or mist, in star or blazing sun,...

And now, O winged Chieftain ! thou hast sent 100  
 A moon-beam to the deep, deep water-world,  
 To find Endymion.

On gold sand impearl'd

With lilly shells, and pebbles milky white,  
 Poor Cynthia greeted him, and sooth'd her light  
 Against his pallid face : he felt the charm 105  
 To breathlessness, and suddenly a warm  
 Of his heart's blood : 'twas very sweet ; he stay'd  
 His wandering steps, and half-entranced laid  
 His head upon a tuft of straggling weeds,  
 To taste the gentle moon, and freshening beads, 110  
 Lash'd from the crystal roof by fishes' tails.  
 And so he kept, until the rosy veils  
 Mantling the east, by Aurora's peering hand  
 Were lifted from the water's breast, and fann'd  
 Into sweet air ; and sober'd morning came 115  
 Meekly through billows : — when like taper-flame  
 Left sudden by a dallying breath of air,  
 He rose in silence, and once more 'gan fare  
 Along his fated way.

Far had he roam'd.

He might have di'd: but now, with cheered feel,  
He onward kept; wooing these thoughts to steal  
About the labyrinth in his soul of love. 140

“What is there in thee, Moon! that thou shouldst move  
My heart so potently? When yet a child  
I oft have dry'd my tears when thou hast smil'd.  
Thou seem'dst my sister: hand in hand we went 145  
From eve to morn across the firmament.  
No apples would I gather from the tree,  
Till thou hadst cool'd their cheeks deliciously:  
No tumbling water ever spake romance,  
But when my eyes with thine thereon could dance: 150  
No woods were green enough, no bower divine,  
Until thou liftedst up thine eyelids fine:  
In sowing time ne'er would I dibble take,  
Or drop a seed, till thou wast wide awake;  
And, in the summer tide of blossoming, 155  
No one but thee hath heard me blythly sing  
And mesh my dewy flowers all the night.  
No melody was like a passing spright  
If it went not to solemnize thy reign.  
Yes, in my boyhood, every joy and pain 160  
By thee were fashion'd to the self-same end;  
And as I grew in years, still didst thou blend  
With all my ardours: thou wast the deep glen;  
Thou wast the mountain-top — the sage's pen —  
The poet's harp — the voice of friends — the sun 165  
Thou wast the river — thou wast glory won;  
Thou wast my clarion's blast — thou wast my steed —  
My goblet full of wine — my topmost deed: —  
Thou wast the charm of women, lovely Moon!  
O what a wild and harmonized tune 170

(140) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *went* for *kept*.

(150) The draft reads *soul* in place of *eyes*.

(156) This line affords a curious instance of waywardness in the matter of spelling: the last word but one is *blithly* in the first edition, *blythly* in the finished manuscript, and, vide Woodhouse, *blitheby* in the draft. In Book I, line 939, the cognate adjective is spelt with a *y*, both in manuscript and in first edition; so that it is to be presumed that Keats really preferred this orthography, which is that adopted in *Piers Plowman*.

(159) The draft yields the alternative readings *flew* and *sought* in place of *went*.

(168) Instead of *topmost* the draft has *highest*.

(170) In the draft, *harmonising*, and in the next line the alternative readings *swag* and *made* for *struck*.

My spirit struck from all the beautiful!  
 On some bright essence could I lean, and lull  
 Myself to immortality: I prest  
 Nature's soft pillow in a wakeful rest.  
 But, gentle Orb! there came a nearer bliss — 175  
 My strange love came — Felicity's abyss!  
 She came, and thou didst fade, and fade away —  
 Yet not entirely; no, thy starry sway  
 Has been an under-passion to this hour.  
 Now I begin to feel thine orby power 180  
 Is coming fresh upon me: O be kind,  
 Keep back thine influence, and do not blind  
 My sovereign vision. — Dearest love, forgive  
 That I can think away from thee and live! —  
 Pardon me, airy planet, that I prize 185  
 One thought beyond thine argent luxuries!  
 How far beyond!" At this a surpris'd start  
 Frosted the springing verdure of his heart;  
 For as he lifted up his eyes to swear  
 How his own goddess was past all things fair, 190  
 He saw far in the concave green of the sea  
 An old man sitting calm and peacefully.  
 Upon a weeded rock this old man sat,  
 And his white hair was awful, and a mat

Quicksand, and whirlpool, and deserted shore,  
 Were emblem'd in the woof; with every shape  
 That skims, or dives, or sleeps, 'twixt cape and cape.  
 The gulphing whale was like a dot in the spell, 205  
 Yet look upon it, and 'twould size and swell  
 To its huge self; and the minutest fish  
 Would pass the very hardest gazer's wish,  
 And show his little eye's anatomy.  
 Then there was pictur'd the regality 210  
 Of Neptune; and the sea nymphs round his state,  
 In beauteous vassalage, look up and wait.  
 Beside this old man lay a pearly wand,  
 And in his lap a book, the which he conn'd  
 So stedfastly, that the new denizen 215  
 Had time to keep him in amazed ken,  
 To mark these shadowings, and stand in awe.

The old man rais'd his hoary head and saw  
 The wilder'd stranger — seeming not to see,  
 His features were so lifeless. Suddenly 220  
 He woke as from a trance; his snow-white brows  
 Went arching up, and like two magic ploughs  
 Furrow'd deep wrinkles in his forehead large,  
 Which kept as fixedly as rocky marge,  
 Till round his wither'd lips had gone a smile. 225  
 Then up he rose, like one whose tedious toil  
 Had watch'd for years in forlorn hermitage,  
 Who had not from mid-life to utmost age  
 Eas'd in one accent his o'er-burden'd soul,  
 Even to the trees. He rose: he grasp'd his stole, 230  
 With convuls'd clenches waving it abroad,

---

Moans, shrieks, and curses, and blaspheming prayers  
 Accosted us. We climbed the oozy stairs...

The third of these lines was the one lost and recovered. No doubt in the present case as in that the omission arose in copying, the sense being complete in each instance without the rhyme. The only difference is that Keats was his own copyist for the press and saw his poem in print, while Shelley's only appeared when the poet was "beyond the stars." Otherwise, the one case perfectly illustrates the other.

(206) In the draft —

Yet look upon it long, 'twould grow and swell...

(226) The draft reads *studious* for *tedious*.

(230) In the finished manuscript, *Not even*, — *Not* being however crossed through with a pencil.



And in a voice of solemn joy, that aw'd  
Echo into oblivion, he said:—

“Thou art the man! Now shall I lay my head  
In peace upon my watery pillow: now 235  
Sleep will come smoothly to my weary brow.  
O Jove! I shall be young again, be young!  
O shell-borne Neptune, I am pierc'd and stung  
With new-born life! What shall I do? Where go,  
When I have cast this serpent-skin of woe?— 240  
I'll swim to the syrens, and one moment listen  
Their melodies, and see their long hair glisten;  
Anon upon that giant's arm I'll be,  
That writhes about the roots of Sicily:  
To northern seas I'll in a twinkling sail, 245  
And mount upon the snortings of a whale  
To some black cloud; thence down I'll madly sweep  
On forked lightning, to the deepest deep,  
Where through some sucking pool I will be hur'l'd  
With rapture to the other side of the world! 250  
O, I am full of gladness! Sisters three,  
I bow full hearted to your old decree!  
Yes, every god be thank'd, and power benign,  
For I no more shall wither, droop, and pine.

Her soft arms were entwining me, and on 270  
 Her voice I hung like fruit among green leaves :  
 Her lips were all my own, and — ah, ripe sheaves  
 Of happiness ! ye on the stubble droop,  
 But never may be garner'd. I must stoop  
 My head, and kiss death's foot. Love ! love, farewell ! 275  
 Is there no hope from thee ? This horrid spell  
 Would melt at thy sweet breath. — By Dian's hind  
 Feeding from her white fingers, on the wind  
 I see thy streaming hair ! and now, by Pan,  
 I care not for this old mysterious man !" 280

He spake, and walking to that aged form,  
 Look'd high defiance. Lo ! his heart 'gan warm  
 With pity, for the grey-hair'd creature wept.  
 Had he then wrong'd a heart where sorrow kept ?  
 Had he, though blindly contumelious, brought 285  
 Rheum to kind eyes, a sting to humane thought,  
 Convulsion to a mouth of many years ?  
 He had in truth : and he was ripe for tears.  
 The penitent shower fell, as down he knelt  
 Before that care-worn sage, who trembling felt 290  
 About his large dark locks, and faltering spake :

“ Arise, good youth, for sacred Phœbus' sake !  
 I know thine inmost bosom, and I feel  
 A very brother's yearning for thee steal  
 Into my own : for why ? thou openest 295  
 The prison gates that have so long opprest  
 My weary watching. Though thou know'st it not,  
 Thou art commission'd to this fated spot  
 For great enfranchisement. O weep no more ;  
 I am a friend to love, to loves of yore : 300  
 Aye, hadst thou never lov'd an unknown power,  
 I had been grieving at this joyous hour.  
 But even now most miserable old,  
 I saw thee, and my blood no longer cold  
 Gave mighty pulses : in this tottering case 305  
 Grew a new heart, which at this moment plays

(286) In the finished manuscript, *humane*: in the first edition *human*, which must surely be an error undiscovered by Keats.

(291) The draft reads, haltingly, *The youths* in place of *About his*.

(294) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *father's* for *brother's*.

As dancingly as thine. Be not afraid,  
For thou shalt hear this secret all display'd,  
Now as we speed towards our joyous task."

So saying, this young soul in age's mask  
Went forward with the Carian side by side : 310  
Resuming quickly thus ; while ocean's tide  
Hung swollen at their backs, and jewel'd sands  
Took silently their foot-prints.

" My soul stands

Now past the midway from mortality, 315  
And so I can prepare without a sigh  
To tell thee briefly all my joy and pain.  
I was a fisher once, upon this main,  
And my boat danc'd in every creek and bay ;  
Rough billows were my home by night and day, — 320  
The sea-gulls not more constant ; for I had  
No housing from the storm and tempests mad,  
But hollow rocks, — and they were palaces  
Of silent happiness, of slumberous ease :  
Long years of misery have told me so. 325  
Aye, thus it was one thousand years ago.  
One thousand years ! — Is it then possible  
To look so plainly through them ? to discern

Plaining discrepant between sea and sky.  
 Dolphins were still my playmates ; shapes unseen  
 Would let me feel their scales of gold and green,  
 Nor be my desolation ; and, full oft, 345  
 When a dread waterspout had rear'd aloft  
 Its hungry hugeness, seeming ready ripe  
 To burst with hoarsest thunderings, and wipe  
 My life away like a vast sponge of fate,  
 Some friendly monster, pitying my sad state, 350  
 Has div'd to its foundations, gulph'd it down,  
 And left me tossing safely. But the crown  
 Of all my life was utmost quietude :  
 More did I love to lie in cavern rude,  
 Keeping in wait whole days for Neptune's voice, 355  
 And if it came at last, hark, and rejoice !  
 There blush'd no summer eve but I would steer  
 My skiff along green shelving coasts, to hear  
 The shepherd's pipe come clear from aery steep,  
 Mingled with ceaseless bleatings of his sheep : 360  
 And never was a day of summer shine,  
 But I beheld its birth upon the brine :  
 For I would watch all night to see unfold  
 Heaven's gates, and Æthon snort his morning gold  
 Wide o'er the swelling streams : and constantly 365  
 At brim of day-tide, on some grassy lea,  
 My nets would be spread out, and I at rest.  
 The poor folk of the sea-country I blest  
 With daily boon of fish most delicate :  
 They knew not whence this bounty, and elate 370  
 Would strew sweet flowers on a sterile beach.

" Why was I not contented ? Wherefore reach  
 At things which, but for thee, O Latmian !  
 Had been my dreary death ? Fool ! I began

(342) The draft reads '*twixt the sea and sky* ; and the finished manuscript reads *between* for *between*.

(353) In the finished manuscript, *tip-top* instead of *utmost*.

(358) In the unfinished manuscript, *coast*, not *coasts*.

(364) See Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book II (Sandys's Translation) :

Meane while the Sunnes swift Horses, hot *Pyrvus*,  
 Light *Æthon*, fiery *Phlegon*, bright *Eðus*,  
 Neighing aloud, inflame the Ayre with heat ;  
 And, with their thundering hooves, the barriers beate.

(367) Cancelled manuscript reading *outspread* for *spread out*.

To feel distemper'd longings : to desire 375  
The utmost privilege that ocean's sire  
Could grant in benediction : to be free  
Of all his kingdom. Long in misery  
I wasted, ere in one extremest fit  
I plung'd for life or death. To interknit 380  
One's senses with so dense a breathing stuff  
Might seem a work of pain ; so not enough  
Can I admire how crystal-smooth it felt,  
And buoyant round my limbs. At first I dwelt  
Whole days and days in sheer astonishment ; 385  
Forgetful utterly of self-intent ;  
Moving but with the mighty ebb and flow.  
Then, like a new fledg'd bird that first doth show  
His spreaded feathers to the morrow chill,  
I try'd in fear the pinions of my will. 390  
'Twas freedom ! and at once I visited  
The ceaseless wonders of this ocean-bed.  
No need to tell thee of them, for I see  
That thou hast been a witness — it must be —  
For these I know thou canst not feel a drouth, 395  
By the melancholy corners of that mouth.  
So I will in my story straightway pass  
To more immediate matter. Woe, alas !

Until 'twas too fierce agony to bear; 410  
 And in that agony, across my grief  
 It flashed, that Circe might find some relief—  
 Cruel enchantress! So above the water  
 I rear'd my head, and look'd for Phœbus' daughter.  
 Ææa's isle was wondering at the moon: — 415  
 It seem'd to whirl around me, and a swoon  
 Left me dead-drifting to that fatal power.

“ When I awoke, 'twas in a twilight bower;  
 Just when the light of morn, with hum of bees,  
 Stole through its verdurous matting of fresh trees. 420  
 How sweet, and sweeter! for I heard a lyre,  
 And over it a sighing voice expire.  
 It ceas'd — I caught light footsteps; and anon  
 The fairest face that morn e'er look'd upon  
 Push'd through a screen of roses. Starry Jove! 425  
 With tears, and smiles, and honey-words she wove  
 A net whose thraldom was more bliss than all  
 The range of flower'd Elysium. Thus did fall  
 The dew of her rich speech: “ Ah! Art awake?  
 “ O let me hear thee speak, for Cupid's sake! 430  
 “ I am so oppress'd with joy! Why, I have shed  
 “ An urn of tears, as though thou wert cold dead;  
 “ And now I find thee living, I will pour  
 “ From these devoted eyes their silver store,  
 “ Until exhausted of the latest drop, 435  
 “ So it will pleasure thee, and force thee stop  
 “ Here, that I too may live: but if beyond  
 “ Such cool and sorrowful offerings, thou art fond  
 “ Of soothing warmth, of dalliance supreme;  
 “ If thou art ripe to taste a long love dream; 440

(412) In the draft, *might afford relief*.

(415) The draft reads *looking for wondering*.

(417) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *towards for to*.

(419) The draft reads *What time for Just when*.

(421-2) Cancelled reading of the manuscript —

How sweet to me! and then I heard a Lyre  
 With which a sighing voice.

(425) The draft reads *Mighty for Starry*.

(429) The inverted commas before each line of this speech, to mark it as one speech within another, are in the manuscript, but not in the first edition, though carefully inserted in the corrected copy in my possession.

(432) The draft reads *as if for as though*.

(436) In the draft, *would* in place of *will*.

" If smiles, if dimples, tongues for ardour mute,  
 " Hang in thy vision like a tempting fruit,  
 " O let me pluck it for thee." Thus she link'd  
 Her charming syllables, till indistinct  
 Their music came to my o'er-sweeten'd soul; 445  
 And then she hover'd over me, and stole  
 So near, that if no nearer it had been  
 This furrow'd visage thou hadst never seen.

" Young man of Latmus! thus particular  
 Am I, that thou may'st plainly see how far 450  
 This fierce temptation went: and thou may'st not  
 Exclaim, How then, was Scylla quite forgot?

" Who could resist? Who in this universe?  
 She did so breathe ambrosia; so immerse  
 My fine existence in a golden clime. 455  
 She took me like a child of suckling time,  
 And cradled me in roses. Thus condemn'd,  
 The current of my former life was stemm'd,  
 And to this arbitrary queen of sense  
 I bow'd a tranced vassal; nor would thence 460  
 Have mov'd, even though Amphion's harp had woo'd  
 Me back to Scylla o'er the billows rude.

Warbling for very joy mellifluous sorrow —  
To me new born delights !

“ Now let me borrow,  
For moments few, a temperament as stern  
As Pluto's sceptre, that my words not burn  
These uttering lips, while I in calm speech tell  
How specious heaven was changed to real hell. 475

“ One morn she left me sleeping : half awake  
I sought for her smooth arms and lips, to slake  
My greedy thirst with nectarous camel-draughts ;  
But she was gone. Whereat the barbed shafts 480  
Of disappointment stuck in me so sore,  
That out I ran and search'd the forest o'er.  
Wandering about in pine and cedar gloom  
Damp awe assail'd me ; for there 'gan to boom  
A sound of moan, an agony of sound, 485  
Sepulchral from the distance all around.  
Then came a conquering earth-thunder, and rumbled  
That fierce complain to silence : while I stumbled  
Down a precipitous path, as if impell'd.  
I came to a dark valley. — Groanings swell'd 490  
Poisonous about my ears, and louder grew,  
The nearer I approach'd a flame's gaunt blue,  
That glar'd before me through a thorny brake.  
This fire, like the eye of gordian snake,  
Bewitch'd me towards ; and I soon was near 495  
A sight too fearful for the feel of fear :  
In thicket hid I curs'd the haggard scene —  
The banquet of my arms, my arbour queen,  
Seated upon an uptorn forest root ;  
And all around her shapes, wizard and brute, 500  
Laughing, and wailing, groveling, serpentine,  
Showing tooth, tusk, and venom-bag, and sting !  
O such deformities ! Old Charon's self,  
Should he give up awhile his penny pelf,

(477) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *day* for *morn*.

(483) The contraction *Wand'ring* occurs here in the finished manuscript.

(495) In the draft, *Drew me towards it*, showing that *towards* was used as a dissyllable ; so that *I fear it* was advisedly cancelled in revising the line.

(498) Woodhouse notes, presumably from the draft, the variation —

My beautiful rose bud, my arbour Queen,  
and in the next line but one *about* for *around*.



And take a dream 'mong rushes Stygian, 505  
 It could not be so phantasy'd. Fierce, wan,  
 And tyrannizing was the lady's look,  
 As over them a gnarled staff she shook.  
 Oft-times upon the sudden she laughed out,  
 And from a basket empty'd to the rout 510  
 Clusters of grapes, the which they raven'd quick  
 And roar'd for more; with many a hungry lick  
 About their shaggy jaws. Avenging, slow,  
 Anon she took a branch of mistletoe,  
 And empty'd on't a black dull-gurgling phial: 515  
 Groan'd one and all, as if some piercing trial  
 Was sharpening for their pitiable bones.  
 She lifted up the charm: appealing groans  
 From their poor breasts went suing to her ear  
 In vain; remorseless as an infant's bier 520  
 She whisk'd against their eyes the sooty oil.  
 Whereat was heard a noise of painful toil,  
 Increasing gradual to a tempest rage,  
 Shrieks, yells, and groans of torture-pilgrimage;  
 Until their grieved bodies 'gan to bloat 525  
 And puff from the tail's end to stifled throat:  
 Then was appalling silence: then a sight  
 More wildering than all that hoarse affright;

- " Or let me from this heavy prison fly :  
 " Or give me to the air, or let me die !  
 " I sue not for my happy crown again ;  
 " I sue not for my phalanx on the plain ;  
 " I sue not for my lone, my widow'd wife ; 545  
 " I sue not for my ruddy drops of life,  
 " My children fair, my lovely girls and boys !  
 " I will forget them ; I will pass these joys ;  
 " Ask nought so heavenward, so too — too high :  
 " Only I pray, as fairest boon, to die, 550  
 " Or be deliver'd from this cumbrous flesh,  
 " From this gross, detestable, filthy mesh,  
 " And merely given to the cold bleak air.  
 " Have mercy, Goddess ! Circe, feel my prayer ! "
- " That curst magician's name fell icy numb 555  
 Upon my wild conjecturing : truth had come  
 Naked and sabre-like against my heart.  
 I saw a fury whetting a death-dart ;  
 And my slain spirit, overwrought with fright,  
 Fainted away in that dark lair of night. 560  
 Think, my deliverer, how desolate  
 My waking must have been ! disgust, and hate,  
 And terrors manifold divided me  
 A spoil amongst them. I prepar'd to flee  
 Into the dungeon core of that wild wood : 565  
 I fled three days — when lo ! before me stood  
 Glaring the angry witch. O Dis, even now,  
 A clammy dew is bending on my brow,  
 At mere remembering her pale laugh, and curse.  
 " Ha ! ha ! Sir Dainty ! there must be a nurse 570

(545-8) The draft reads as follows —

I sue not for my lonely, my dear wife,  
 I sue not for my hearts blood drops of life,  
 My sweetest babes, my lovely girls and boys,  
 Ah, likely they are dead — I pass these joys...

(554) At this point the draft reads thus —

Have mercy goddess ! feel oh feel my prayer.  
 Pity great Circe ! " — nor sight nor syllable  
 Saw I or heard I more of this sick spell.

(560) In the draft, *dull realm* for *dark lair*.

(567) In the finished manuscript we read *e'en* for *even*.

(569) In the manuscript, *remembering*.

(570) This line begins with *Ah, Ah*, in the finished manuscript, and Woodhouse notes, in apparent allusion to the draft, "formerly *O! O!*" The inverted commas

" Made of rose leaves and thistledown, express,  
 " To cradle thee my sweet, and lull thee: yes,  
 " I am too flinty-hard for thy nice touch:  
 " My tenderest squeeze is but a giant's clutch.  
 " So, fairy-thing, it shall have lullabies 575  
 " Unheard of yet; and it shall still its cries  
 " Upon some breast more lilly-feminine.  
 " Oh, no — it shall not pine, and pine, and pine  
 " More than one pretty, trifling thousand years;  
 " And then 'twere pity, but fate's gentle shears 580  
 " Cut short its immortality. Sea-flirt!  
 " Young dove of the waters! truly I'll not hurt  
 " One hair of thine: see how I weep and sigh,  
 " That our heart-broken parting is so nigh.  
 " And must we part? Ah, yes, it must be so. 585  
 " Yet ere thou leavest me in utter woe,  
 " Let me sob over thee my last adieus,  
 " And speak a blessing: Mark me! Thou hast thews  
 " Immortal, for thou art of heavenly race:  
 " But such a love is mine, that here I chace 590  
 " Eternally away from thee all bloom  
 " Of youth, and destine thee towards a tomb.  
 " Hence shalt thou quickly to the watery vast;  
 " And there, ere many days be overpast,

A hand was at my shoulder to compel  
 My sullen steps; another 'fore my eyes  
 Mov'd on with pointed finger. In this guise  
 Enforced, at the last by ocean's foam  
 I found me; by my fresh, my native home.  
 Its tempering coolness, to my life akin,  
 Came salutary as I waded in; 610  
 And, with a blind voluptuous rage, I gave  
 Battle to the swollen billow-ridge, and drave  
 Large froth before me, while there yet remain'd  
 Hale strength, nor from my bones all marrow drain'd.

“ Young lover, I must weep — such hellish spite  
 With dry cheek who can tell? While thus my might  
 Proving upon this element, dismay'd,  
 Upon a dead thing's face my hand I laid;  
 I look'd — 'twas Scylla! Cursed, cursed Circe!  
 O vulture-witch, hast never heard of mercy? 620  
 Could not thy harshest vengeance be content,  
 But thou must nip this tender innocent  
 Because I lov'd her? — Cold, O cold indeed  
 Were her fair limbs, and like a common weed  
 The sea-swell took her hair. Dead as she was 625  
 I clung about her waist, nor ceas'd to pass  
 Fleet as an arrow through unfathom'd brine,  
 Until there shone a fabric crystalline,  
 Ribb'd and inlaid with coral, pebble, and pearl.  
 Headlong I darted; at one eager swirl 630  
 Gain'd its bright portal, enter'd, and behold!  
 'Twas vast, and desolate, and icy-cold;  
 And all around — But wherefore this to thee  
 Who in few minutes more thyself shalt see? —

(612) The past tense *drave*, common enough in Elizabethan literature, is probably another Spenserian memory: thus, in *The Faerie Queene*, Book I, Canto ix, stanza 33, we have —

the ghastly Owle,  
 Shrieking his balefull note, which ever drave  
 Far from that haunt all other chearefull fowle.

(620) In the finished manuscript, *hast* was written originally; but *hadst* is written over it in pencil, though this seemingly more correct inflection was not adopted in the printed book or restored in the corrected copy.

(621) In the finished manuscript,

Was not thine harshest Avengence content,

but in the first edition the line stands as in the text.

(626) In the draft —

I clung about her waist and dived nor ceas'd to pass...

I left poor Scylla in a niche and fled. 635  
 My fever'd parchings up, my scathing dread  
 Met palsy half way: soon these limbs became  
 Gaunt, wither'd, sapless, feeble, cramp'd, and lame.

“ Now let me pass a cruel, cruel space,  
 Without one hope, without one faintest trace 640  
 Of mitigation, or redeeming bubble  
 Of colour'd phantasy; for I fear 'twould trouble  
 Thy brain to loss of reason: and next tell  
 How a restoring chance came down to quell  
 One half of the witch in me.

“ On a day, 645  
 Sitting upon a rock above the spray,  
 I saw grow up from the horizon's brink  
 A gallant vessel: soon she seem'd to sink  
 Away from me again, as though her course  
 Had been resum'd in spite of hindering force — 650  
 So vanish'd: and not long, before arose  
 Dark clouds, and muttering of winds morose.  
 Old Æolus would stifle his mad spleen,  
 But could not: therefore all the billows green  
 Toss'd up the silver spume against the clouds. 655

Grasping this scroll, and this same slender wand. 670  
 I knelt with pain — reach'd out my hand — had grasp'd  
 These treasures — touch'd the knuckles — they unclasp'd —  
 I caught a finger: but the downward weight  
 O'erpowered me — it sank. Then 'gan abate  
 The storm, and through chill aguish gloom outburst 675  
 The comfortable sun. I was athirst  
 To search the book, and in the warming air  
 Parted its dripping leaves with eager care.  
 Strange matters did it treat of, and drew on  
 My soul page after page, till well-nigh won 680  
 Into forgetfulness; when stupefied,  
 I read these words, and read again, and tried  
 My eyes against the heavens, and read again.  
 O what a load of misery and pain  
 Each Atlas-line bore off! — a shine of hope 685  
 Came gold around me, cheering me to cope  
 Strenuous with hellish tyranny. Attend!  
 For thou hast brought their promise to an end.

*“ In the wide sea there lives a forlorn wretch,  
 Doom'd with enfeebled carcase to outstretch 690  
 His loath'd existence through ten centuries,  
 And then to die alone. Who can devise  
 A total opposition? No one. So  
 One million times ocean must ebb and flow,  
 And he oppressed. Yet he shall not die, 695  
 These things accomplish'd: — If he utterly  
 Scans all the depths of magic, and expounds  
 The meanings of all motions, shapes, and sounds;  
 If he explores all forms and substances  
 Straight homeward to their symbol-essences; 700  
 He shall not die. Moreover, and in chief,  
 He must pursue this task of joy and grief  
 Most piously; — all lovers tempest-tost,  
 And in the savage overwhelming lost,*

(678) The draft reads *Unfolded its damp leaves.*

(685-6) The draft reads —

sweet rays of hope

Glanc'd round me cheering me at once to cope.

(689) The word *Listen* stands in the finished manuscript at the beginning of this line, making an Alexandrine of it; but it is struck through with a pencil.

(697) In the draft this line begins with *Sounds* instead of *Scans*.

(702) The draft reads *heaviest grief* for *joy and grief*.

*He shall deposit side by side, until* 705  
*Time's creeping shall the dreary space fulfil:*  
*Which done, and all these labours ripened,*  
*A youth, by heavenly power lov'd and led,*  
*Shall stand before him; whom he shall direct*  
*How to consummate all. The youth elect* 710  
*Must do the thing, or both will be destroy'd." —*

“Then,” cried the young Endymion, overjoy'd,  
 “We are twin brothers in this destiny!  
 Say, I intreat thee, what achievement high  
 Is, in this restless world, for me reserv'd. 715  
 What! if from thee my wandering feet had swerv'd,  
 Had we both perish'd?” — “Look!” the sage reply'd,  
 “Dost thou not mark a gleaming through the tide,  
 Of diverse brilliances? 'tis the edifice  
 I told thee of, where lovely Scylla lies; 720  
 And where I have enshrined piously  
 All lovers, whom fell storms have doom'd to die  
 Throughout my bondage.” Thus discoursing, on  
 They went till unobscur'd the porches shone;  
 Which hurryingly they gain'd, and enter'd straight. 725  
 Sure never since king Neptune held his state  
 Was seen such wonder underneath the stars.

And each one's gentle wrists, with reverence,  
Put cross-wise to its heart.

“ Let us commence,”

Whisper'd the guide, stuttering with joy, “ even now.” 745  
He spake, and, trembling like an aspen-bough,  
Began to tear his scroll in pieces small,  
Uttering the while some mumblings funeral.  
He tore it into pieces small as snow  
That drifts unfeather'd when bleak northerns blow ; 750  
And having done it, took his dark blue cloak  
And bound it round Endymion : then struck  
His wand against the empty air times nine.—  
“ What more there is to do, young man, is thine :  
But first a little patience ; first undo 755  
This tangled thread, and wind it to a clue.  
Ah, gentle ! 'tis as weak as spider's skein ;  
And shouldst thou break it — What, is it done so clean ?  
A power overshadows thee ! O, brave !  
The spite of hell is tumbling to its grave. 760  
Here is a shell ; 'tis pearly blank to me,  
Nor mark'd with any sign or charactery —  
Canst thou read aught ? O read for pity's sake !  
Olympus ! we are safe ! Now, Carian, break  
This wand against yon lyre on the pedestal.” 765

'Twas done : and straight with sudden swell and fall  
Sweet music breath'd her soul away, and sigh'd  
A lullaby to silence. — “ Youth ! now strew

(744) The words *Let us commence, Whisper'd the guide, stuttering with joy, even now* are enclosed in inverted commas as one speech in the first edition ; and the manuscript reads similarly except that it has *é'en* for *even*.

(750) The draft reads *all shatter'd* for *unfeather'd*.

(751) In the manuscript, *having don't, he took*, instead of *having done it, took*.

(752) In the manuscript Keats perfects his rhyme here by using *stroke* as the past tense of *strike* ; but the word is *struck* in his printed text.

(753) The draft reads *at something in the air*.

(756) In the manuscript *clew* for *clue*.

(758) The words *is it* are contracted here to *is't* in the manuscript.

(767) There is nothing in the finished manuscript to indicate how this line came to lose its fellow, if it ever had one ; and Woodhouse notes nothing from the draft bearing on that point. There is perhaps a reminiscence here of William Chamberlayne, in whose *Pharonnida* (Book III, Canto iii, page 51 of the second volume of the 1820 edition) we have —

The glad birds had sung  
A lullaby to night,...



These minced leaves on me, and passing through  
 Those files of dead, scatter the same around, 77  
 And thou wilt see the issue." — 'Mid the sound  
 Of flutes and viols, ravishing his heart,  
 Endymion from Glaucus stood apart,  
 And scatter'd in his face some fragments light.  
 How lightning-swift the change ! a youthful wight 77  
 Smiling beneath a coral diadem,  
 Out-sparkling sudden like an upturn'd gem,  
 Appear'd, and, stepping to a beauteous corse,  
 Kneel'd down beside it, and with tenderest force  
 Press'd its cold hand, and wept, — and Scylla sigh'd ! 78  
 Endymion, with quick hand, the charm apply'd —  
 The nymph arose : he left them to their joy,  
 And onward went upon his high employ,  
 Showering those powerful fragments on the dead.  
 And, as he pass'd, each lifted up its head, 78  
 As doth a flower at Apollo's touch.  
 Death felt it to his inwards : 'twas too much :  
 Death fell a weeping in his charnel-house.  
 The Latmian persever'd along, and thus  
 All were re-animated. There arose 79  
 A noise of harmony, pulses and throes  
 Of gladness in the air — while many, who  
 With mutual arms devout and true,  
 Had the rest

The fair assembly wander'd to and fro,  
Distracted with the richest overflow  
Of joy that ever pour'd from heaven. 805

— "Away!"

Shouted the new born god; "Follow, and pay  
Our piety to Neptunus supreme!" —  
Then Scylla, blushing sweetly from her dream,  
They led on first, bent to her meek surprise, 810  
Through portal columns of a giant size,  
Into the vaulted, boundless emerald.  
Joyous all follow'd, as the leader call'd,  
Down marble steps; pouring as easily  
As hour-glass sand,— and fast, as you might see 815  
Swallows obeying the south summer's call,  
Or swans upon a gentle waterfall.

Thus went that beautiful multitude, nor far,  
Ere from among some rocks of glittering spar,  
Just within ken, they saw descending thick 820  
Another multitude. Whereat more quick  
Mov'd either host. On a wide sand they met,  
And of those numbers every eye was wet;  
For each their old love found. A murmuring rose,  
Like what was never heard in all the throes 825  
Of wind and waters: 'tis past human wit  
To tell; 'tis dizziness to think of it.

This mighty consummation made, the host  
Mov'd on for many a league; and gain'd, and lost  
Huge sea-marks; vanward swelling in array, 830  
And from the rear diminishing away, —  
Till a faint dawn surpris'd them. Glaucus cry'd,

(811) *Though* stands for *Through* both in the finished manuscript and in the first edition.

(832-40) In the draft this passage reads thus:

Till a faint dawning bloom'd — and Glaucus cried,  
"Behold! behold, the palace of his pride!  
Of God Neptunus pride." With hum increased  
The host moved on towards that brightening east.  
And as it moved along proud domes arose  
In prospect, — diamond gleams, and golden glows  
Of amber leveling against their faces.  
With expectation high, and hurried paces  
Still onward; &c.

The word *hum* instead of *noise* in line 834 was repeated in the finished manuscript, which reads otherwise like the printed text.

- " Behold ! behold, the palace of his pride !  
 God Neptune's palaces ! " With noise increas'd,  
 They shoulder'd on towards that brightening east. 835  
 At every onward step proud domes arose  
 In prospect, — diamond gleams, and golden glows  
 Of amber 'gainst their faces levelling.  
 Joyous, and many as the leaves in spring,  
 Still onward ; still the splendour gradual swell'd. 840  
 Rich opal domes were seen, on high upheld  
 By jasper pillars, letting through their shafts  
 A blush of coral. Copious wonder-draughts  
 Each gazer drank ; and deeper drank more near :  
 For what poor mortals fragment up, as mere 845  
 As marble was there lavish, to the vast  
 Of one fair palace, that far far surpass'd,  
 Even for common bulk, those olden three,  
 Memphis, and Babylon, and Nineveh.
- As large, as bright, as colour'd as the bow 850  
 Of Iris, when unfading it doth show  
 Beyond a silvery shower, was the arch  
 Through which this Paphian army took its march,  
 Into the outer courts of Neptune's state :  
 Whence could be seen, direct, a golden gate, 855

At his right hand stood winged Love, and on  
His left sat smiling Beauty's paragon. 865

Far as the mariner on highest mast  
Can see all round upon the calmed vast,  
So wide was Neptune's hall: and as the blue  
Doth vault the waters, so the waters drew  
Their doming curtains, high, magnificent, 870  
Aw'd from the throne aloof; — and when storm-rent  
Disclos'd the thunder-gloomings in Jove's air;  
But sooth'd as now, flash'd sudden everywhere,  
Noiseless, sub-marine cloudlets, glittering  
Death to a human eye: for there did spring 875  
From natural west, and east, and south, and north,  
A light as of four sunsets, blazing forth  
A gold-green zenith 'bove the Sea-God's head.  
Of lucid depth the floor, and far outspread  
As breezeless lake, on which the slim canoe 880  
Of feather'd Indian darts about, as through  
The delicatest air: air verily,  
But for the portraiture of clouds and sky:  
This palace floor breath-air, — but for the amaze  
Of deep-seen wonders motionless, — and blaze 885  
Of the dome pomp, reflected in extremes,  
Globing a golden sphere.

They stood in dreams  
Till Triton blew his horn. The palace rang;  
The Nereids danc'd; the Syrens faintly sang;  
And the great Sea-King bow'd his dripping head. 890  
Then Love took wing, and from his pinions shed  
On all the multitude a nectarous dew.  
The ooze-born Goddess beckoned and drew  
Fair Scylla and her guides to conference;  
And when they reach'd the throned eminence 895  
She kist the sea-nymph's cheek, — who sat her down

---

(864-5) This couplet reads as follows in the draft:

At his right hand stood winged Love, elate  
And on his left Love's fairest mother sate.

This reading leaves no doubt, if indeed there was any before, as to the identity of  
'smiling Beauty's paragon.'

(866) Originally an Alexandrine, reading *canopy* for *vault*, but corrected in the  
manuscript.

(889) The draft reads *sweetly* for *faintly*.

A toying with the doves. Then, — "Mighty crown  
 And sceptre of this kingdom!" Venus said,  
 "Thy vows were on a time to Nais paid:  
 Behold!" — Two copious tear-drops instant fell 900  
 From the God's large eyes; he smil'd delectable,  
 And over Glaucus held his blessing hands. —  
 "Endymion! Ah! still wandering in the bands  
 Of love? Now this is cruel. Since the hour  
 I met thee in earth's bosom, all my power 905  
 Have I put forth to serve thee. What, not yet  
 Escap'd from dull mortality's harsh net?  
 A little patience, youth! 'twill not be long,  
 Or I am skillless quite: an idle tongue,  
 A humid eye, and steps luxurious, 910  
 Where these are new and strange, are ominous.  
 Aye, I have seen these signs in one of heaven,  
 When others were all blind; and were I given  
 To utter secrets, haply I might say  
 Some pleasant words: but Love will have his day. 915  
 So wait awhile expectant. Pr'ythee soon,  
 Even in the passing of thine honey-moon,  
 Visit thou my Cythera: thou wilt find  
 Cupid well-natured, my Adonis kind;  
 And pray persuade with thee — Ah, I have done, 920

New growth about each shell and pendent lyre ;  
 The which, in disentangling for their fire,  
 Pull'd down fresh foliage and coverture 930  
 For dainty toying. Cupid, empire-sure,  
 Flutter'd and laugh'd, and oft-times through the throng  
 Made a delighted way. Then dance, and song,  
 And garlanding grew wild ; and pleasure reign'd.  
 In harmless tendril they each other chain'd, 935  
 And strove who should be smother'd deepest in  
 Fresh crush of leaves.

O 'tis a very sin  
 For one so weak to venture his poor verse  
 In such a place as this. O do not curse,  
 High Muses ! let him hurry to the ending. 940  
 All suddenly were silent. A soft blending

Of dulcet instruments came charmingly ;  
 And then a hymn.

“ KING of the stormy sea !  
 Brother of Jove, and co-inheritor  
 Of elements ! Eternally before 945  
 Thee the waves awful bow. Fast, stubborn rock,  
 At thy fear'd trident shrinking, doth unlock  
 Its deep foundations, hissing into foam.  
 All mountain-rivers, lost in the wide home  
 Of thy capacious bosom, ever flow. 950  
 Thou frownest, and old Æolus thy foe  
 Skulks to his cavern, 'mid the gruff complaint

(930) In the draft, *full* instead of *fresh*.

(934-5) The draft reads thus —

and wildness reigns.

They bound each other up in tendril chains...

(937) In the draft, *crushing*, not *crush of*.

(945) This passage was written thus —

Eternally in awe

Of thee the Waves bow down.

The reading of the text is inserted with a pencil in the finished manuscript.

(949-50) In the draft these two lines were written and pointed thus —

A thousand rivers, lost in the wide home

Of thy capacious bosom, ever flow.

And in the finished manuscript also there is a comma after *bosom* and none after *lost*. This is clearly sufficient evidence on which to reject the punctuation of the first and other printed editions, which place a comma after *lost* and none after *bosom*.

Of all his rebel tempests. Dark clouds faint  
 When, from thy diadem, a silver gleam  
 Slants over blue dominion. Thy bright team 955  
 Gulphs in the morning light, and scuds along  
 To bring thee nearer to that golden song  
 Apollo singeth, while his chariot  
 Waits at the doors of heaven. Thou art not  
 For scenes like this: an empire stern hast thou; 960  
 And it hath furrow'd that large front: yet now,  
 As newly come of heaven, dost thou sit  
 To blend and interknit  
 Subdued majesty with this glad time,  
 O shell-borne King sublime! 965  
 We lay our hearts before thee evermore —  
 We sing, and we adore!

“ Breathe softly, flutes;  
 Be tender of your strings, ye soothing lutes;  
 Nor be the trumpet heard! O vain, O vain; 970  
 Not flowers budding in an April rain,  
 Nor breath of sleeping dove, nor river's flow, —  
 No, nor the Æolian twang of Love's own bow,  
 Can mingle music fit for the soft ear  
 Of goddess Cytherea! 975

O sweetest essence! sweetest of all minions!  
 God of warm pulses, and dishevell'd hair,  
 And panting bosoms bare! 985  
 Dear unseen light in darkness! eclipser  
 Of light in light! delicious poisoner!  
 Thy venom'd goblet will we quaff until  
 We fill — we fill!  
 And by thy Mother's lips —— ”

Was heard no more 990  
 For clamour, when the golden palace door  
 Opened again, and from without, in shone  
 A new magnificence. On oozy throne  
 Smooth-moving came Oceanus the old,  
 To take a latest glimpse at his sheep-fold, 995  
 Before he went into his quiet cave  
 To muse for ever — Then a lucid wave,  
 Scoop'd from its trembling sisters of mid-sea,  
 Afloat, and pillowing up the majesty  
 Of Doris, and the Ægean seer, her spouse — 1000  
 Next, on a dolphin, clad in laurel boughs,  
 Theban Amphion leaning on his lute:  
 His fingers went across it — All were mute  
 To gaze on Amphitrite, queen of pearls,  
 And Thetis pearly too. —

The palace whirls 1005  
 Around giddy Endymion; seeing he  
 Was there far strayed from mortality.  
 He could not bear it — shut his eyes in vain;  
 Imagination gave a dizzier pain.  
 “O I shall die! sweet Venus, be my stay! 1010  
 Where is my lovely mistress? Well-away!  
 I die — I hear her voice — I feel my wing — ”  
 At Neptune's feet he sank. A sudden ring

(983) In the draft —

O sweetest essence of all sweetest minions!

(1000) Nereus, the son of Oceanus, who espoused his sister Doris, and had by her fifty daughters, the Nereides.

(1007) The draft gives this line thus —

Was there, a stray lamb from mortality.

(1012) This line reads thus in the draft —

I die — love calls me hence ” — thus muttering—



Of Nereids were about him, in kind strife  
 To usher back his spirit into life : 1015  
 But still he slept. At last they interwove  
 Their cradling arms, and purpos'd to convey  
 Towards a crystal bower far away.

Lo! while slow carried through the pitying crowd,  
 To his inward senses these words spake aloud ; 1020  
 Written in star-light on the dark above :  
*Dearest Endymion ! my entire love !  
 How have I dwelt in fear of fate : 'tis done —  
 Immortal bliss for me too hast thou won.  
 Arise then ! for the hen-dove shall not hatch  
 Her ready eggs, before I'll kissing snatch 1025  
 Thee into endless heaven. Awake ! awake !*

The youth at once arose : a placid lake  
 Came quiet to his eyes ; and forest green,  
 Cooler than all the wonders he had seen, 1030  
 Lull'd with its simple song his fluttering breast.  
 How happy once again in grassy nest !

(1015) After this line are the four following in the draft —

They gave him nectar — shed bright drops, and strove  
 Long time in vain. At last they interwove

# ENDYMION.

## BOOK IV.

MUSE of my native land! loftiest Muse!  
O first-born on the mountains! by the hues  
Of heaven on the spiritual air begot:  
Long didst thou sit alone in northern grot,  
While yet our England was a wolfish den; 5  
Before our forests heard the talk of men;  
Before the first of Druids was a child; —  
Long didst thou sit amid our regions wild  
Rapt in a deep prophetic solitude.  
There came an eastern voice of solemn mood: — 10  
Yet wast thou patient. Then sang forth the Nine,  
Apollo's garland: — yet didst thou divine  
Such home-bred glory, that they cry'd in vain,  
"Come hither, Sister of the Island!" Plain  
Spake fair Ausonia; and once more she spake 15  
A higher summons: — still didst thou betake  
Thee to thy native hopes. O thou hast won  
A full accomplishment! The thing is done,  
Which undone, these our latter days had risen

---

(2) This line originally began with *O Mountain-born* in the draft, where also *while* stands cancelled in favour of *by*.

(6) The draft reads *voice* for *talk*, and in line 7 *habe* for *child*.

(10) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *an hebrew voice*.

(11) The draft reads *those nine*. The references to the Hebrew, Greek, Roman, and Italian literatures are scarcely as clear and pointed as might have been expected from Keats.

(13) In the finished manuscript, *in vain they cry'd*.

(14) The draft gives *from the Island*.

(16) The draft reads *In self surpassing summons*.

(17) Originally an Alexandrine, in both the manuscripts —

    Thee to thyself and to thy hopes. O thou hast won —  
but altered in the second manuscript so as to correspond with the text.

(19) In the draft, thus —

    Which wanting all these latter days had dawn'd...

On barren souls. Great Muse, thou know'st what prison, 20  
 Of flesh and bone, curbs, and confines, and frets  
 Our spirit's wings: despondency besets  
 Our pillows; and the fresh to-morrow morn  
 Seems to give forth its light in very scorn  
 Of our dull, uninspired, snail-paced lives. 25  
 Long have I said, how happy he who shrives  
 To thee! But then I thought on poets gone,  
 And could not pray: — nor can I now — so on  
 I move to the end in lowliness of heart. —

“ Ah, woe is me! that I should fondly part 30  
 From my dear native land! Ah, foolish maid!  
 Glad was the hour, when, with thee, myriads bade  
 Adieu to Ganges and their pleasant fields!  
 To one so friendless the clear freshet yields  
 A bitter coolness; the ripe grape is sour: 35  
 Yet I would have, great gods! but one short hour  
 Of native air — let me but die at home.”

Endymion to heaven's airy dome  
 Was offering up a hecatomb of vows,  
 When these words reach'd him. Whereupon he bows 40  
 His head through thorny-green entanglement

That I may worship them? No eyelids meet  
 To twinkle on my bosom? No one dies  
 Before me, till from these enslaving eyes  
 Redemption sparkles! — I am sad and lost." 50

Thou, Carian lord, hadst better have been tost  
 Into a whirlpool. Vanish into air,  
 Warm mountaineer! for canst thou only bear  
 A woman's sigh alone and in distress? 55  
 See not her charms! Is Phœbe passionless?  
 Phœbe is fairer far — O gaze no more: —  
 Yet if thou wilt behold all beauty's store,  
 Behold her panting in the forest grass!  
 Do not those curls of glossy jet surpass 60  
 For tenderness the arms so idly lain  
 Amongst them? Feelest not a kindred pain,  
 To see such lovely eyes in swimming search  
 After some warm delight, that seems to perch  
 Dovelike in the dim cell lying beyond 65  
 Their upper lids? — Hist!

“O for Hermes' wand,  
 To touch this flower into human shape!  
 That woodland Hyacinthus could escape  
 From his green prison, and here kneeling down  
 Call me his queen, his second life's fair crown! 70  
 Ah me, how I could love! — My soul doth melt  
 For the unhappy youth — Love! I have felt

---

(48-54) In the place of this passage the draft has the following:

No eyelids meet  
 To twinkle on my bosom! false! 'twas false  
 They said how beautiful I was! who calls  
 Me now divine? Who now kneels down and dies  
 Before me till from these enslaving eyes  
 Redemption sparkles. Ah me how sad I am!  
 Of all the poisons sent to make us mad  
 Of all death's overwhelming! — Stay Beware  
 Young Mountaineer!

I presume it was intended to read *Ah me how I am sad!*  
 (55) In the draft —

A woman's sigh in the luxury of distress?

(63) The draft reads *fruitless for swimming*.

(70) According to the draft, *living's crown*.

(72-3) The draft reads these two lines thus:

After some beautiful youth — Who, who hath felt  
 So warm a faintness, such a meek surrender...

and there is a cancelled opening for line 73, *As I do now*.

So faint a kindness, such a meek surrender  
 To what my own full thoughts had made too tender,  
 That but for tears my life had fled away! — 75  
 Ye deaf and senseless minutes of the day,  
 And thou, old forest, hold ye this for true,  
 There is no lightning, no authentic dew  
 But in the eye of love: there's not a sound,  
 Melodious howsoever, can confound 80  
 The heavens and earth in one to such a death  
 As doth the voice of love: there's not a breath  
 Will mingle kindly with the meadow air,  
 Till it has panted round, and stolen a share  
 Of passion from the heart!" —

Upon a bough 85

He leant, wretched. He surely cannot now  
 Thirst for another love: O impious,  
 That he can even dream upon it thus! —  
 Thought he, "Why am I not as are the dead,  
 Since to a woe like this I have been led 90  
 Through the dark earth, and through the wondrous sea?  
 Goddess! I love thee not the less: from thee  
 By Juno's smile I turn not — no, no, no —  
 While the great waters are at ebb and flow. —



I have a triple soul! O fond pretence —  
For both, for both my love is so immense,  
I feel my heart is cut for them in twain.” 95

And so he groan'd, as one by beauty slain.  
The lady's heart beat quick, and he could see  
Her gentle bosom heave tumultuously. 100

He sprang from his green covert: there she lay,  
Sweet as a muskrose upon new-made hay;  
With all her limbs on tremble, and her eyes  
Shut softly up alive. To speak he tries.

“ Fair damsel, pity me! forgive that I  
Thus violate thy bower's sanctity! 105

O pardon me, for I am full of grief —  
Grief born of thee, young angel! fairest thief!  
Who stolen hast away the wings wherewith  
I was to top the heavens. Dear maid, sith 110

Thou art my executioner, and I feel  
Loving and hatred, misery and weal,  
Will in a few short hours be nothing to me,  
And all my story that much passion slew me;  
Do smile upon the evening of my days: 115

And, for my tortur'd brain begins to craze,  
Be thou my nurse; and let me understand  
How dying I shall kiss that lilly hand. —  
Dost weep for me? Then should I be content.

Scowl on, ye fates! until the firmament  
Outblackens Erebus, and the full-cavern'd earth  
Crumbles into itself. By the cloud girth  
Of Jove, those tears have given me a thirst 120

To meet oblivion.” — As her heart would burst  
The maiden sobb'd awhile, and then reply'd:  
“ Why must such desolation betide 125

---

(97) In the first edition this line is —

I feel my heart is cut in twain for them.

And it is left so in the corrected copy. It was originally written so in the finished manuscript, where, however, the inversion of the last four words is directed in pencil, so that the right reading, that of the text, must have been lost through a series of oversights.

(104) Here again the draft is fuller, — thus:

Shut softly up alive — Ye harmonies  
Ye tranced visions — ye flights ideal  
Nothing are ye to life so dainty real  
O Lady pity me!

As that thou speak'st of? Are not these green nooks  
 Empty of all misfortune? Do the brooks  
 Utter a gorgon voice? Does yonder thrush,  
 Schooling its half-fledg'd little ones to brush 130  
 About the dewy forest, whisper tales? —  
 Speak not of grief, young stranger, or cold snails  
 Will slime the rose to night. Though if thou wilt,  
 Methinks 'twould be a guilt — a very guilt —  
 Not to companion thee, and sigh away 135  
 The light — the dusk — the dark — till break of day! "  
 "Dear lady," said Endymion, "'tis past:  
 I love thee! and my days can never last.  
 That I may pass in patience still speak:  
 Let me have music dying, and I seek 140  
 No more delight — I bid adieu to all.  
 Didst thou not after other climates call,  
 And murmur about Indian streams?" — Then she,  
 Sitting beneath the midmost forest tree,  
 For pity sang this roundelay ——— 145

"O Sorrow,  
 Why dost borrow

(127) In this line we read *speakst* in the finished manuscript, but *speakest* in the first edition.

(128) For this choice use of the word *empty*, compare Shakespeare, *Love's Labour's Lost*, Act V, Scene II, line 878:

And I shall find you empty of that fault,...

(136) After this line the speech of Phœbe still goes on in the draft; and Endymion's answer varies, — thus:

Canst thou do so? Is there no balm, no cure  
 Could not a beckoning Hebe soon allure  
 Thee into Paradise? What sorrowing  
 So weighs thee down what utmost woe could bring  
 This madness — Sit thee down by me, and ease  
 Thine heart in whispers — haply by degrees  
 I may find out some soothing medicine." —  
 "Dear Lady," said Endymion, "I pine  
 I die — the tender accents thou hast spoken  
 Have finish'd all — my heart is lost and broken.  
 That I may pass in patience still speak:  
 Let me have music dying, and I seek  
 No more delight — I bid adieu to all.  
 Didst thou not after other climates call  
 And murmur about Indian streams — now, now —  
 I listen, it may save me — O my vow —  
 Let me have music dying!" The ladye  
 Sitting beneath the midmost forest tree  
 With tears of pity sang this roundelay —

- The natural hue of health, from vermeil lips?—  
 To give maiden blushes  
 To the white rose bushes? 150  
 Or is't thy dewy hand the daisy tips?
- “ O Sorrow,  
 Why dost borrow  
 The lustrous passion from a falcon-eye?—  
 To give the glow-worm light? 155  
 Or, on a moonless night,  
 To tinge, on syren shores, the salt sea-spry?
- “ O Sorrow,  
 Why dost borrow  
 The mellow ditties from a mourning tongue?— 160  
 To give at evening pale  
 Unto the nightingale,  
 That thou mayst listen the cold dews among?
- “ O Sorrow,  
 Why dost borrow 165  
 Heart's lightness from the merriment of May?—  
 A lover would not tread  
 A cowslip on the head,  
 Though he should dance from eve till peep of day—  
 Nor any drooping flower 170  
 Held sacred for thy bower,  
 Wherever he may sport himself and play.
- “ To Sorrow,  
 I bade good-morrow,

It will be remembered that this antiquated use of the word *ladye* was defended by Coleridge both in theory and in practice. See the Ballad of *The Dark Ladye*.

(151) In the first edition *is it*; but *is't* in the manuscript and in the corrected copy.

(154) The draft reads *lover's eye* for *falcon-eye*.

(157) Keats has been supposed to have invented the variant *spry* for *spray* for convenience of rhyming, just as Shelley has been accused of inventing for like reasons the word *uprest*, for example, in *Laon and Cythna*, Canto III, Stanza xxi. Sandys, the translator of Ovid, may not be a very good authority; but he is not improbably Keats's authority for *spry*, and will certainly do in default of a better. The following couplet is from Sandys's Ovid (Book XI, verses 498-9):

Now tossing Seas appeare to touch the sky,  
 And wrap their curls in clouds, frotht with their spry.

(172) The draft reads *However* for *Wherever*.

(174) In the finished manuscript, *bad*: in the first edition, *bade*.



And thought to leave her far away behind; — 175  
     But cheerly, cheerly,  
     She loves me dearly;  
 She is so constant to me, and so kind:  
     I would deceive her  
     And so leave her, 180  
 But ah! she is so constant and so kind.

“ Beneath my palm trees, by the river side,  
 I sat a weeping: in the whole world wide  
 There was no one to ask me why I wept,—  
     And so I kept 185  
 Brimming the water-lilly cups with tears  
     Cold as my fears.

“ Beneath my palm trees, by the river side,  
 I sat a weeping: what enamour'd bride,  
 Cheated by shadowy wooer from the clouds,  
     But hides and shrouds 190  
 Beneath dark palm trees by a river side?

“ And as I sat, over the light blue hills  
 There came a noise of revellers: the rills  
 Into the wild stream, and down the hills

- " Within his car, aloft, young Bacchus stood,  
 Trifling his ivy-dart, in dancing mood, 210  
     With sidelong laughing;  
 And little rills of crimson wine imbru'd  
 His plump white arms, and shoulders, enough white  
     For Venus' pearly bite:  
 And near him rode Silenus on his ass, 215  
 Pelted with flowers as he on did pass  
     Tipsily quaffing.
- " Whence came ye, merry Damsels! whence came ye!  
 So many, and so many, and such glee?  
 Why have ye left your bowers desolate, 220  
     Your lutes, and gentler fate?—  
 ' We follow Bacchus! Bacchus on the wing,  
     A conquering!  
 Bacchus, young Bacchus! good or ill betide,  
 We dance before him thorough kingdoms wide:— 225  
 Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
     To our wild minstrelsy!'
- " Whence came ye, jolly Satyrs! whence came ye!  
 So many, and so many, and such glee?  
 Why have ye left your forest haunts, why left 230  
     Your nuts in oak-tree cleft?—  
 ' For wine, for wine we left our kernel tree;  
 For wine we left our heath, and yellow brooms,  
     And cold mushrooms;  
 For wine we follow Bacchus through the earth; 235  
 Great God of breathless cups and chirping mirth!—  
 Come hither, lady fair, and joined be  
     To our mad minstrelsy!'
- " Over wide streams and mountains great we went,  
 And, save when Bacchus kept his ivy tent, 240  
 Onward the tiger and the leopard pants,  
     With Asian elephants:

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(212-13) The draft reads *streaks* for *rills* and *dainty* for *enough*.

(214) In the draft, *For any pearly bite*.

(221) An additional line comes between 221 and 222 in the draft—  
     We follow Bacchus from a far country.

(225) The draft reads *beside* for *before*.

(232) The draft reads *forest meat* for *kernel tree*.

(236) The draft has *endless* for *chirping*.

Onward these myriads — with song and dance,  
 With zebras striped, and sleek Arabians' prance,  
 Web-footed alligators, crocodiles, 245  
 Bearing upon their scaly backs, in files,  
 Plump infant laughers mimicking the coil  
 Of seamen, and stout galley-rowers' toil:  
 With toying oars and silken sails they glide,  
 Nor care for wind and tide. 250

“ Mounted on panthers' furs and lions' manes,  
 From rear to van they scour about the plains;  
 A three days' journey in a moment done:  
 And always, at the rising of the sun,  
 About the wilds they hunt with spear and horn, 255  
 On spleenful unicorn.

“ I saw Osirian Egypt kneel adown  
 Before the vine-wreath crown!  
 I saw parch'd Abyssinia rouse and sing  
 To the silver cymbals' ring! 260  
 I saw the whelming vintage hotly pierce  
 Old Tartary the fierce!  
 The kings of Inde their jewel-sceptres veil,  
 And from their treasures scatter pearly hail;



In search of pleasure throughout every clime: 275  
Alas, 'tis not for me!  
Bewitch'd I sure must be,  
To lose in grieving all my maiden prime.

“Come then, Sorrow!  
Sweetest Sorrow! 280  
Like an own babe I nurse thee on my breast:  
I thought to leave thee  
And deceive thee,  
But now of all the world I love thee best.

“There is not one, 285  
No, no, not one  
But thee to comfort a poor lonely maid;  
Thou art her mother,  
And her brother,  
Her playmate, and her wooer in the shade.” 290

O what a sigh she gave in finishing,  
And look, quite dead to every worldly thing!  
Endymion could not speak, but gaz'd on her;  
And listened to the wind that now did stir  
About the crisped oaks full drearily, 295  
Yet with as sweet a softness as might be  
Remember'd from its velvet summer song.  
At last he said: “Poor lady, how thus long  
Have I been able to endure that voice?  
Fair Melody! kind Syren! I've no choice; 300  
I must be thy sad servant evermore:  
I cannot choose but kneel here and adore.  
Alas, I must not think — by Phœbe, no!  
Let me not think, soft Angel! shall it be so?  
Say, beautifullest, shall I never think? 305  
O thou could'st foster me beyond the brink  
Of recollection! make my watchful care  
Close up its bloodshot eyes, nor see despair!

---

(277) In the draft, *Bewitch'd must I sure be.*

(291-2) The draft reads *Sob for sigh*, and begins line 292 with *And look'd quite dead.*

(297) The gentleness of summer wind seems to have been a cherished idea with Keats. Compare *Sleep and Poetry*, line 1—

What is more gentle than a wind in summer?

(304) In the finished manuscript, *shall't* for *shall it*.

Do gently murder half my soul, and I  
 Shall feel the other half so utterly! — 310  
 I'm giddy at that cheek so fair and smooth;  
 O let it blush so ever! let it soothe  
 My madness! let it mantle rosy-warm  
 With the tinge of love, panting in safe alarm.—  
 This cannot be thy hand, and yet it is; 315  
 And this is sure thine other softling — this  
 Thine own fair bosom, and I am so near!  
 Wilt fall asleep? O let me sip that tear!  
 And whisper one sweet word that I may know  
 This is this world — sweet dewy blossom!" — *Woe!* 320  
*Woe! Woe to that Endymion! Where is he?* —  
 Even these words went echoing dimly  
 Through the wide forest — a most fearful tone,  
 Like one repenting in his latest moan;  
 And while it died away a shade pass'd by, 325  
 As of a thunder cloud. When arrows fly  
 Through the thick branches, poor ring-doves sleek forth  
 Their timid necks and tremble; so these both  
 Leant to each other trembling, and sat so  
 Waiting for some destruction — when lo, 330  
 Foot-feather'd Mercury appear'd sublime  
 Beyond the tall tree tops; and in less time  
 Than shoots the slanted hail-storm, down he drom

So from the turf outsprang two steeds jet-black.  
 Each with large dark blue wings upon his back.  
 The youth of Caria plac'd the lovely dame 345  
 On one, and felt himself in spleen to tame  
 The other's fierceness. Through the air they flew,  
 High as the eagles. Like two drops of dew  
 Exhal'd to Phœbus' lips, away they are gone,  
 Far from the earth away — unseen, alone, 350  
 Among cool clouds and winds, but that the free,  
 The buoyant life of song can floating be  
 Above their heads, and follow them untir'd.—  
 Muse of my native land, am I inspir'd?  
 This is the giddy air, and I must spread 355  
 Wide pinions to keep here; nor do I dread  
 Or height, or depth, or width, or any chance  
 Precipitous: I have beneath my glance  
 Those towering horses and their mournful freight.  
 Could I thus sail, and see, and thus await 360  
 Fearless for power of thought, without thine aid?—

There is a sleepy dusk, an odorous shade  
 From some approaching wonder, and behold  
 Those winged steeds, with snorting nostrils bold  
 Snuff at its faint extreme, and seem to tire, 365  
 Dying to embers from their native fire!

There curl'd a purple mist around them; soon,  
 It seem'd as when around the pale new moon  
 Sad Zephyr droops the clouds like weeping willow:  
 'Twas Sleep slow journeying with head on pillow. 370  
 For the first time, since he came nigh dead born  
 From the old womb of night, his cave forlorn  
 Had he left more forlorn; for the first time,  
 He felt aloof the day and morning's prime —  
 Because into his depth Cimmerian 375  
 There came a dream, showing how a young man,

(343) The draft reads *coal black*.

(349) In the manuscript, *they're* for *they are*. Compare Donne, 1st Satyre,

At last his love he in a window spies,  
 And, like light dew exhaled, he flings from me.

(366) In the draft —

Seeming but embers to their former fire.

(367-8) The draft reads *comes* for *curl'd* and *half moon* for *new moon*.

(370) In the draft, *voyaging*, not *journeying*.

Ere a lean bat could plump its wintery skin,  
 Would at high Jove's empyreal footstool win  
 An immortality, and how espouse  
 Jove's daughter, and be reckon'd of his house. 380  
 Now was he slumbering towards heaven's gate,  
 That he might at the threshold one hour wait  
 To hear the marriage melodies, and then  
 Sink downward to his dusky cave again.  
 His litter of smooth semiluculent mist, 385  
 Diversely ting'd with rose and amethyst,  
 Puzzled those eyes that for the centre sought;  
 And scarcely for one moment could be caught  
 His sluggish form reposing motionless.  
 Those two on winged steeds, with all the stress 390  
 Of vision search'd for him, as one would look  
 Athwart the sallows of a river nook  
 To catch a glance at silver throated eels,—  
 Or from old Skiddaw's top, when fog conceals  
 His rugged forehead in a mantle pale, 395  
 With an eye-guess towards some pleasant vale  
 Descry a favourite hamlet faint and far.

These raven horses, though they foster'd are  
 Of earth's splenetic fire, dully drop  
 Their full-vein'd ears, nostrils blood wide, and stop: 400

Upon his arm he braces Pallas' shield,  
 And strives in vain to unsettle and wield  
 A Jovian thunderbolt: arch Hebe brings 415  
 A full-brimm'd goblet, dances lightly, sings  
 And tantalizes long; at last he drinks,  
 And lost in pleasure at her feet he sinks,  
 Touching with dazzled lips her starlight hand.  
 He blows a bugle,— an ethereal band 420  
 Are visible above: the Seasons four,—  
 Green-kyrtled Spring, flush Summer, golden store  
 In Autumn's sickle, Winter frosty hoar,  
 Join dance with shadowy Hours; while still the blast,  
 In swells unmitigated, still doth last 425  
 To sway their floating morris. "Whose is this?  
 Whose bugle?" he inquires: they smile — "O Dis!  
 Why is this mortal here? Dost thou not know  
 Its mistress' lips? Not thou?—'Tis Dian's: lo!  
 She rises crescented!" He looks, 'tis she, 430  
 His very goddess: good-bye earth, and sea,  
 And air, and pains, and care, and suffering;  
 Good-bye to all but love! Then doth he spring  
 Towards her, and awakes — and, strange, o'erhead,  
 Of those same fragrant exhalations bred, 435  
 Beheld awake his very dream: the gods  
 Stood smiling; merry Hebe laughs and nods;  
 And Phœbe bends towards him crescented.  
 O state perplexing! On the pinion bed,  
 Too well awake, he feels the panting side 440  
 Of his delicious lady. He who died

(418) In the draft —

With pleasure at her knees he swoons and sinks.

(420) This line stands thus (an Alexandrine) in the draft:

He takes a bugle blows it, an aerial band...

(421) In the draft, *o'erhead* for *above*.

(424) In the draft, *with the shadowy Hours*; and the next line stands thus (another Alexandrine) —

Echoed in swells unmitigated, still doth last.

(428) The draft reads *a mortal*.

(429-30) In both manuscripts the preceding line stands rhymeless, and these two stand thus —

Its Mistress' Lips? Not thou? Ah, Ah, Ah, Ah!

'Tis Dian's, here she comes, look out afar,

so that by the withdrawal of one line two very noticeable flaws were remedied. In line 430, the finished manuscript has a cancelled reading *look'd* for *looks*.

(432) The draft reads *cares*.



For soaring too audacious in the sun,  
 When that same treacherous wax began to run,  
 Felt not more tongue-tied than Endymion.  
 His heart leapt up as to its rightful throne, 445  
 To that fair shadow'd passion puls'd its way —  
 Ah, what perplexity! Ah, well a day!  
 So fond, so beauteous was his bed-fellow,  
 He could not help but kiss her: then he grew  
 Awhile forgetful of all beauty save 450  
 Young Phœbe's, golden hair'd; and so 'gan crave  
 Forgiveness: yet he turn'd once more to look  
 At the sweet sleeper, — all his soul was shook, —  
 She press'd his hand in slumber; so once more  
 He could not help but kiss her and adore. 455  
 At this the shadow wept, melting away.  
 The Latmian started up: "Bright goddess, stay!  
 Search my most hidden breast! By truth's own tongue,  
 I have no dædale heart: why is it wrung  
 To desperation? Is there nought for me, 460  
 Upon the bourn of bliss, but misery?"

These words awoke the stranger of dark tresses:  
 Her dawning love-look rapt Endymion blesses  
 With 'haviour soft. Sleep yawn'd from underneath.  
 "Thou swan of Ganges, let us no more breathe 465

Pillow'd in lovely idleness, nor dream'st  
 What horrors may discomfort thee and me.  
 Ah, shouldst thou die from my heart-treachery! —  
 Yet did she merely weep — her gentle soul 470  
 Hath no revenge in it: as it is whole  
 In tenderness, would I were whole in love!  
 Can I prize thee, fair maid, all price above,  
 Even when I feel as true as innocence?  
 I do, I do. — What is this soul then? Whence 475  
 Came it? It does not seem my own, and I  
 Have no self-passion or identity.  
 Some fearful end must be: where, where is it?  
 By Nemesis, I see my spirit flit  
 Alone about the dark — Forgive me, sweet: 480  
 Shall we away?" He rous'd the steeds: they beat  
 Their wings chivalrous into the clear air,  
 Leaving old Sleep within his vapoury lair.

The good-night blush of eve was waning slow,  
 And Vesper, risen star, began to throe 485  
 In the dusk heavens silverly, when they  
 Thus sprang direct towards the Galaxy.  
 Nor did speed hinder converse soft and strange —  
 Eternal oaths and vows they interchange,  
 In such wise, in such temper, so aloof 490  
 Up in the winds, beneath a starry roof,  
 So witless of their doom, that verily  
 'Tis well nigh past man's search their hearts to see;  
 Whether they wept, or laugh'd, or griev'd, or toy'd —  
 Most like with joy gone mad, with sorrow cloy'd. 495

Full facing their swift flight, from ebon streak,

(483) The draft reads —

Leaving old Sleep to sail in vapoury lair.

(484-7) These four lines stand thus in the draft:

The good-night hush of eve was waning slow,  
 And Vesper's timid pulse began to throe  
 In the dusk heavens silverly, when they  
 Thus sprang direct up to the Galaxy.

The finished manuscript corresponds with the text; but in the printed book the word *silverly* for *silverly* slipped in, and so the passage has been printed ever since. There can be no doubt that *silverly* was the word intended.

(492) The draft reads *witless of all things*.

(495) In the draft there are two cancelled readings, *Until* and *Haply*, in place of *Most like*; and *woe* stands in the place of *joy*.

The moon put forth a little diamond peak,  
 No bigger than an unobserved star,  
 Or tiny point of fairy scymetar ;  
 Bright signal that she only stoop'd to tie 500  
 Her silver sandals, ere deliciously  
 She bow'd into the heavens her timid head.  
 Slowly she rose, as though she would have fled,  
 While to his lady meek the Carian turn'd,  
 To mark if her dark eyes had yet discern'd 505  
 This beauty in its birth — Despair ! despair !  
 He saw her body fading gaunt and spare  
 In the cold moonshine. Straight he seiz'd her wrist ;  
 It melted from his grasp : her hand he kiss'd,  
 And, horror ! kiss'd his own — he was alone. 510  
 Her steed a little higher soar'd, and then  
 Dropt hawkwise to the earth.

There lies a den,

Beyond the seeming confines of the space  
 Made for the soul to wander in and trace  
 Its own existence, of remotest glooms. 515  
 Dark regions are around it, where the tombs  
 Of buried griefs the spirit sees, but scarce  
 One hour doth linger weeping, for the pierce  
 Of new-born woe it feels more inly smart :

Sleep may be had in that deep den of all. 525  
 There anguish does not sting; nor pleasure pall:  
 Woe-hurricanes beat ever at the gate,  
 Yet all is still within and desolate.  
 Beset with plainful gusts, within ye hear  
 No sound so loud as when on curtain'd bier 530  
 The death-watch tick is stifled. Enter none  
 Who strive therefore: on the sudden it is won.  
 Just when the sufferer begins to burn,  
 Then it is free to him; and from an urn,  
 Still fed by melting ice, he takes a draught — 535  
 Young Semele such richness never quaft  
 In her maternal longing! Happy gloom!  
 Dark Paradise! where pale becomes the bloom  
 Of health by due; where silence dreariest  
 Is most articulate; where hopes infest; 540  
 Where those eyes are the brightest far that keep  
 Their lids shut longest in a dreamless sleep.  
 O happy spirit-home! O wondrous soul!  
 Pregnant with such a den to save the whole  
 In thine own depth. Hail, gentle Carian! 545  
 For, never since thy griefs and woes began,  
 Hast thou felt so content: a grievous feud  
 Hath led thee to this Cave of Quietude.  
 Aye, his lull'd soul was there, although upborne  
 With dangerous speed: and so he did not mourn 550  
 Because he knew not whither he was going.  
 So happy was he, not the aerial blowing

(526-7) The draft reads thus:

There anguish stings not — sweetness cannot pall:  
 Dark hurricanes of woe beat ever at the gate,...

(531) The draft has *muffled* in place of *stifled*.

(534) The draft reads *This den is free to him*.

(539) The curious expression *Of health by due*, unmistakably so written in the finished manuscript and printed in the first edition, is represented in the draft by *The rightful tinge of health*. We may therefore presume that *by due* is used as an equivalent for *by right*.

(542) The draft reads *close* for *shut*.

(546) In the draft, *griefs and joys*.

(548) In the first edition, *Hath let*; but *led* in both manuscripts.

(550) In the draft this line reads thus:

With dangerous speed: nor did he sigh and mourn...

In the finished manuscript it was written thus:

On dangerous winds: and so he did not mourn...

and then changed so as to correspond with the text.

Of trumpets at clear parley from the east  
 Could rouse from that fine relish, that high feast.  
 They stung the feather'd horse : with fierce alarm 555  
 He flapp'd towards the sound. Alas, no charm  
 Could lift Endymion's head, or he had view'd  
 A skyey mask, a pinion'd multitude, —  
 And silvery was its passing : voices sweet  
 Warbling the while as if to lull and greet 560  
 The wanderer in his path. Thus warbled they,  
 While past the vision went in bright array.

“ Who, who from Dian's feast would be away?  
 For all the golden bowers of the day  
 Are empty left? Who, who away would be 565  
 From Cynthia's wedding and festivity?  
 Not Hesperus : lo ! upon his silver wings  
 He leans away for highest heaven and sings,  
 Snapping his lucid fingers merrily ! —  
 Ah, Zephyrus ! art here, and Flora too ! 570  
 Ye tender bibbers of the rain and dew,  
 Young playmates of the rose and daffodil,  
 Be careful, ere ye enter in, to fill  
     Your baskets high  
 With fennel green, and balm, and golden pines 575

Yea, every flower and leaf of every clime,  
 All gather'd in the dewy morning: hie  
     Away! fly, fly! — 580  
 Crystalline brother of the belt of heaven,  
 Aquarius! to whom king Jove has given  
 Two liquid pulse streams 'stead of feather'd wings,  
 Two fan-like fountains, — thine illuminings  
     For Dian play: 585  
 Dissolve the frozen purity of air;  
 Let thy white shoulders silvery and bare  
 Show cold through watery pinions; make more bright  
 The Star-Queen's crescent on her marriage night:  
     Haste, haste away! — 590  
 Castor has tam'd the planet Lion, see!  
 And of the Bear has Pollux mastery:  
 A third is in the race! who is the third,  
 Speeding away swift as the eagle bird?  
     The ramping Centaur! 595  
 The Lion's mane's on end: the Bear how fierce!  
 The Centaur's arrow ready seems to pierce  
 Some enemy: far forth his bow is bent  
 Into the blue of heaven. He'll be shent,  
     Pale unrelentor, 600  
 When he shall hear the wedding lutes a playing. —  
 Andromeda! sweet woman! why delaying  
 So timidly among the stars: come hither!  
 Join this bright throng, and nimbly follow whither  
     They all are going. 605  
 Danae's Son, before Jove newly bow'd,  
 Has wept for thee, calling to Jove aloud.  
 Thee, gentle lady, did he disenthral:  
 Ye shall for ever live and love, for all  
     Thy tears are flowing. — 610  
 By Daphne's fright, behold Apollo! — ”

More

Endymion heard not: down his steed him bore,  
 Prone to the green head of a misty hill.

(584) This was originally a short line consisting of the words *Thine illuminings* alone. The whole stanza, lines 581 to 590, was sent by Keats to his friend Baily for his "vote, pro or con," in a letter dated the 22nd of November 1817.

(589) The draft reads *Night-Queen's* for *Star-Queen's*.

(593) The draft reads *Ay three are in the race!*

(607-8) The draft reads —

    calling to Jove aloud  
 For thee — thee gentle did he disenthral.

His first touch of the earth went nigh to kill.  
 "Alas!" said he, "were I but always borne 615  
 Through dangerous winds, had but my footsteps worn  
 A path in hell, for ever would I bless  
 Horrors which nourish an uneasiness  
 For my own sullen conquering: to him  
 Who lives beyond earth's boundary, grief is dim, 620  
 Sorrow is but a shadow: now I see  
 The grass; I feel the solid ground — Ah, me!  
 It is thy voice — divinest! Where? — who? who  
 Left thee so quiet on this bed of dew?  
 Behold upon this happy earth we are; 625  
 Let us aye love each other; let us fare  
 On forest-fruits, and never, never go  
 Among the abodes of mortals here below,  
 Or be by phantoms dup'd. O destiny!  
 Into a labyrinth now my soul would fly, 630  
 But with thy beauty will I deaden it.  
 Where didst thou melt to? By thee will I sit  
 For ever: let our fate stop here — a kid  
 I on this spot will offer: Pan will bid  
 Us live in peace, in love and peace among 635  
 His forest wildernesses. I have clung  
 To nothing, lov'd a nothing, nothing seen



Of heroes gone! Against his proper glory  
 Has my own soul conspired: so my story  
 Will I to children utter, and repent. 645  
 There never liv'd a mortal man, who bent  
 His appetite beyond his natural sphere,  
 But starv'd and died. My sweetest Indian, here,  
 Here will I kneel, for thou redeemed hast  
 My life from too thin breathing: gone and past 650  
 Are cloudy phantasms. Caverns lone, farewell!  
 And air of visions, and the monstrous swell  
 Of visionary seas! No, never more  
 Shall airy voices cheat me to the shore  
 Of tangled wonder, breathless and aghast. 655  
 Adieu, my daintiest Dream! although so vast  
 My love is still for thee. The hour may come  
 When we shall meet in pure elysium.  
 On earth I may not love thee; and therefore  
 Doves will I offer up, and sweetest store 660  
 All through the teeming year: so thou wilt shine  
 On me, and on this damsel fair of mine,  
 And bless our simple lives. My Indian bliss!  
 My river-lilly bud! one human kiss!  
 One sigh of real breath — one gentle squeeze, 665  
 Warm as a dove's nest among summer trees,  
 And warm with dew at ooze from living blood!  
 Whither didst melt? Ah, what of that! — all good  
 We'll talk about — no more of dreaming. — Now,  
 Where shall our dwelling be? Under the brow 670

(646) The draft has the word *Has* instead of *There*.

(649) In the finished manuscript this line stands thus: —  
 Will I kneel, for thou redeemed hast...

(650) Woodhouse notes the following variation, presumably from the draft: —  
 My spirit from too thin a breath — gone and past...

(653) Woodhouse notes the variation *No more, no more*. See Book II, line 199 *et seq.*, for the explanation of this speech of Endymion's.

(656) Woodhouse notes the variation *how vast, how vast*.

(660) Woodhouse notes the variation *I offer thee*.

(661) Cancelled reading of the finished manuscript, *smile for shine*.

(664) Woodhouse notes the variation *mortal for human*.

(666) An imagination in which Hunt would have found it difficult to discover the reality; but probably Keats had never seen the miserable platform of dry twigs that serves for "a dove's nest among summer trees."

(670) Endymion's imaginary home and employments as pictured in the next fifty lines may be compared with Shelley's *Ægean island* described so wonderfully in *Epipsyehidion*. Both passages are thoroughly characteristic; and they show the divergence between the modes of thought and sentiment of the two men in a very marked way.



Of some steep mossy hill, where ivy dun  
Would hide us up, although spring leaves were none;  
And where dark yew trees, as we rustle through,  
Will drop their scarlet berry cups of dew?  
O thou wouldst joy to live in such a place; 675  
Dusk for our loves, yet light enough to grace  
Those gentle limbs on mossy bed reclin'd:  
For by one step the blue sky shouldst thou find,  
And by another, in deep dell below,  
See, through the trees, a little river go 680  
All in its mid-day gold and glimmering.  
Honey from out the gnarled hive I'll bring,  
And apples, wan with sweetness, gather thee, —  
Cresses that grow where no man may them see,  
And sorrel untorn by the dew-claw'd stag: 685  
Pipes will I fashion of the syrinx flag,  
That thou mayst always know whither I roam,  
When it shall please thee in our quiet home  
To listen and think of love. Still let me speak;  
Still let me dive into the joy I seek, — 690  
For yet the past doth prison me. The rill,  
Thou haply mayst delight in, will I fill  
With fairy fishes from the mountain fars

I'll kneel to Vesta, for a flame of fire ;  
 And to god Phœbus, for a golden lyre ;  
 To Empress Dian, for a hunting spear ;  
 To Vesper, for a taper silver-clear,  
 That I may see thy beauty through the night ; 705  
 To Flora, and a nightingale shall light  
 Tame on thy finger ; to the River-gods,  
 And they shall bring thee taper fishing-rods  
 Of gold, and lines of Naiads' long bright tress.  
 Heaven shield thee for thine utter loveliness ! 710  
 Thy mossy footstool shall the altar be  
 'Fore which I'll bend, bending, dear love, to thee :  
 Those lips shall be my Delphos, and shall speak  
 Laws to my footsteps, colour to my cheek,  
 Trembling or stedfastness to this same voice, 715  
 And of three sweetest pleasurings the choice :  
 And that affectionate light, those diamond things,  
 Those eyes, those passions, those supreme pearl springs,  
 Shall be my grief, or twinkle me to pleasure.  
 Say, is not bliss within our perfect seisure ? 720  
 O that I could not doubt ! "

The mountaineer

Thus strove by fancies vain and crude to clear  
 His briar'd path to some tranquillity.  
 It gave bright gladness to his lady's eye,  
 And yet the tears she wept were tears of sorrow ; 725  
 Answering thus, just as the golden morrow  
 Beam'd upward from the vallies of the east :  
 " O that the flutter of this heart had ceas'd,  
 Or the sweet name of love had pass'd away.

(709) The draft reads *with for and*.

(716) This line originally began with the words *And the most velvet*, which are struck out in the finished manuscript. Woodhouse notes, doubtless from the draft, the line —

And the most velvet peaches to my choice.

(720) The draft reads *Is not, then, bliss, &c.*

(721) In the first edition there is a note of interrogation after *doubt* ; but a note of exclamation stands there both in the manuscript and in the corrected copy.

(723) The draft reads *The* for *His*.

(724-5) At the end of the book containing the draft, Keats wrote, apparently as a memorandum for this passage, the two lines —

There was rejoicing in his Lady's eye  
 And yet the tears she wept were tears of sorrow.

(726) The draft has *what time for just as*.

Young feather'd tyrant ! by a swift decay 730  
 Wilt thou devote this body to the earth :  
 And I do think that at my very birth  
 I lisp'd thy blooming titles inwardly ;  
 For at the first, first dawn and thought of thee,  
 With uplift hands I blest the stars of heaven. 735  
 Art thou not cruel? Ever have I striven  
 To think thee kind, but ah, it will not do !  
 When yet a child, I heard that kisses drew  
 Favour from thee, and so I kisses gave  
 To the void air, bidding them find out love : 740  
 But when I came to feel how far above  
 All fancy, pride, and fickle maidenhood,  
 All earthly pleasure, all imagin'd good,  
 Was the warm tremble of a devout kiss, —  
 Even then, that moment, at the thought of this, 745  
 Fainting I fell into a bed of flowers,  
 And languish'd there three days. Ye milder powers,  
 Am I not cruelly wrong'd? Believe, believe  
 Me, dear Endymion, were I to weave  
 With my own fancies garlands of sweet life, 750  
 Thou shouldst be one of all. Ah, bitter strife !  
 I may not be thy love : I am forbidden —  
 Indeed I am — thwarted, affrighted, chidden.

No, no, that shall not be: thee will I bless,  
And bid a long adieu."

The Carian

No word return'd: both lovelorn, silent, wan,  
Into the vallies green together went. 765  
Far wandering, they were perforce content  
To sit beneath a fair lone beechen tree;  
Nor at each other gaz'd, but heavily  
Por'd on its hazle cirque of shedded leaves.

Endymion! unhappy! it nigh grieves 770  
Me to behold thee thus in last extreme:  
Ensky'd ere this, but truly that I deem  
Truth the best music in a first-born song.  
Thy lute-voic'd brother will I sing ere long,  
And thou shalt aid — hast thou not aided me? 775  
Yes, moonlight Emperor! felicity  
Has been thy meed for many thousand years;  
Yet often have I, on the brink of tears,  
Mourn'd as if yet thou wert a forester; —  
Forgetting the old tale.

He did not stir 780  
His eyes from the dead leaves, or one small pulse  
Of joy he might have felt. The spirit culls  
Unfaded amaranth, when wild it strays  
Through the old garden-ground of boyish days.  
A little onward ran the very stream 785  
By which he took his first soft poppy dream;  
And on the very bark 'gainst which he leant  
A crescent he had carv'd, and round it spent  
His skill in little stars. The teeming tree  
Had swollen and green'd the pious charactery, 790

(766) This line begins in the draft with *Long* instead of *Far*.

(769) The draft reads *carpet of shed leaves* instead of *cirque of shedded leaves*.

(772) In the draft —

That hadst been high ere this, but that I deem...

(774) Another allusion to the poetic scheme of which the sumptuous fragment *Hyperson* is the unachieved result.

(778) The draft reads —

Yet often have I, mid some foolish tears,...

(783) The draft has *perchance* in place of *wild*, so as to make *amaranth* scan as a dissyllable.

But not ta'en out. Why, there was not a slope  
 Up which he had not fear'd the antelope;  
 And not a tree, beneath whose rooty shade  
 He had not with his tamed leopards play'd:  
 Nor could an arrow light, or javelin,  
 Fly in the air where his had never been —  
 And yet he knew it not. 795

O treachery!

Why does his lady smile, pleasing her eye  
 With all his sorrowing? He sees her not.  
 But who so stares on him? His sister sure!  
 Peona of the woods! — Can she endure —  
 Impossible — how dearly they embrace!  
 His lady smiles; delight is in her face;  
 It is no treachery. 800

“ Dear brother mine!

Endymion, weep not so! Why shouldst thou pine  
 When all great Latmus so exalt will be?  
 Thank the great gods, and look not bitterly;  
 And speak not one pale word, and sigh no more.  
 Sure I will not believe thou hast such store  
 Of griefs to grieve, and sighs to sigh. 805

The flowers of autumn for your coronals.	
Pan's holy priest for young Endymion calls ;	815
And when he is restor'd, thou, fairest dame,	
Shalt be our queen. Now, is it not a shame	
To see ye thus, — not very, very sad?	
Perhaps ye are too happy to be glad :	
O feel as if it were a common day ;	820
Free-voic'd as one who never was away.	
No tongue shall ask, whence come ye? but ye shall	
Be gods of your own rest imperial.	
Not even I, for one whole month, will pry	
Into the hours that have pass'd us by,	825
Since in my arbour I did sing to thee.	
O Hermes ! on this very night will be	
A hymning up to Cynthia, queen of light ;	
For the soothsayers old saw yesternight	
Good visions in the air, — whence will befall,	830
As say these sages, health perpetual	
To shepherds and their flocks ; and furthermore,	
In Dian's face they read the gentle lore :	
Therefore for her these vesper-carols are.	
Our friends will all be there from nigh and far.	835
Many upon thy death have ditties made ;	
And many, even now, their foreheads shade	
With cypress, on a day of sacrifice.	
New singing for our maids shalt thou devise,	
And pluck the sorrow from our huntsmen's brows.	840
Tell me, my lady-queen, how to espouse	
This wayward brother to his rightful joys !	
His eyes are on thee bent, as thou didst poise	
His fate most goddess-like. Help me, I pray,	
To lure — Endymion, dear brother, say	845
What ails thee? " He could bear no more, and so	

(815) Woodhouse notes the variation *Great Pan's high priest.*

(816) Woodhouse notes the variation —

This Shepherd Prince restor'd, thou, fairest dame,...

(819) Woodhouse notes the following two variants of this line, — one expressly from the draft and the other presumably from the same source :

(1) Perhaps ye feel too much joy — too overglad :

(2) Perhaps ye are too glad, too overglad.

(825) The draft reads *Into the long hours*, so as to avoid the necessity for scanning *hours* as a dissyllable.

(827) In the draft thus—

Why! hark ye! on this very eve will be...

(840) The draft has *cypress for sorrow.*

Bent his soul fiercely like a spiritual bow,  
And twang'd it inwardly, and calmly said :  
" I would have thee my only friend, sweet maid !  
My only visitor ! not ignorant though, 850  
That those deceptions which for pleasure go  
'Mong men, are pleasures real as real may be :  
But there are higher ones I may not see,  
If impiously an earthly realm I take.  
Since I saw thee, I have been wide awake 855  
Night after night, and day by day, until  
Of the empyrean I have drunk my fill.  
Let it content thee. Sister, seeing me  
More happy than betides mortality.  
A hermit young, I'll live in mossy cave, 860  
Where thou alone shalt come to me, and lave  
Thy spirit in the wonders I shall tell.  
Through me the shepherd realm shall prosper well ;  
For to thy tongue will I all health confide.  
And, for my sake, let this young maid abide 865  
With thee as a dear sister. Thou alone,  
Peona, mayst return to me. I own  
This may sound strangely : but when, dearest girl,  
Thou seest it for my happiness, no pearl  
Will trespass down those cheeks. Companion fair ! 870



Long have I sought for rest, and, unaware,  
Behold I find it! so exalted too! 880  
So after my own heart! I knew, I knew  
There was a place untenanted in it:  
In that same void white Chastity shall sit,  
And monitor me nightly to lone slumber.  
With sanest lips I vow me to the number 885  
Of Dian's sisterhood; and, kind lady,  
With thy good help, this very night shall see  
My future days to her fane consecrate."

As feels a dreamer what doth most create  
His own particular fright, so these three felt: 890  
Or like one who, in after ages, knelt  
To Lucifer or Baal, when he'd pine  
After a little sleep: or when in mine  
Far under-ground, a sleeper meets his friends  
Who know him not. Each diligently bends 895  
Towards common thoughts and things for very fear;  
Striving their ghastly malady to cheer,  
By thinking it a thing of yes and no,  
That housewives talk of. But the spirit-blow  
Was struck, and all were dreamers. At the last 900  
Endymion said: "Are not our fates all cast?  
Why stand we here? Adieu, ye tender pair!  
Adieu!" Whereat those maidens, with wild stare,  
Walk'd dizzily away. Pained and hot  
His eyes went after them, until they got 905  
Near to a cypress grove, whose deadly maw,  
In one swift moment, would what then he saw  
Engulph for ever. "Stay!" he cried, "ah, stay!  
Turn, damsels! hist! one word I have to say.  
Sweet Indian, I would see thee once again. 910  
It is a thing I dote on: so I'd fain,  
Peona, ye should hand in hand repair  
Into those holy groves, that silent are  
Behind great Dian's temple. I'll be yon,  
At vesper's earliest twinkle — they are gone — 915  
But once, once, once again —" At this he press'd

(882) Woodhouse notes the variation *void* for *place*.

(888-9) The draft reads *in* for *to* and *can* for *doth*.

(892) In the draft, *at strife* in place of *he'd pine*.

(904) The draft reads *patiently* for *dizzily*.

(906) In the draft, *shade* for *maw*.



His hands against his face, and then did rest  
 His head upon a mossy hillock green,  
 And so remain'd as he a corpse had been  
 All the long day; save when he scanty lifted 920  
 His eyes abroad, to see how shadows shifted  
 With the slow move of time, — sluggish and weary  
 Until the poplar tops, in journey dreary,  
 Had reach'd the river's brim. Then up he rose,  
 And slowly as that very river flows, 925  
 Walk'd towards the temple grove with this lament:  
 "Why such a golden eve? The breeze is sent  
 Careful and soft, that not a leaf may fall  
 Before the serene father of them all  
 Bows down his summer head below the west. 930  
 Now am I of breath, speech, and speed possest,  
 But at the setting I must bid adieu  
 To her for the last time. Night will strew  
 On the damp grass myriads of lingering leaves,  
 And with them shall I die; nor much it grieves 935  
 To die, when summer dies on the cold sward.  
 Why, I have been a butterfly, a lord  
 Of flowers, garlands, love-knots, silly posies,  
 Groves, meadows, melodies, and arbour roses;  
 My kingdom's at its death, and just it is 940

Until that grove appear'd, as if perchance,  
 And then his tongue with sober seemlihed 950  
 Gave utterance as he enter'd: " Ha! I said,  
 " King of the butterflies; but by this gloom,  
 And by old Rhadamanthus' tongue of doom,  
 This dusk religion, pomp of solitude,  
 And the Promethean clay by thief endued, 955  
 By old Saturnus' forelock, by his head  
 Shook with eternal palsy, I did wed  
 Myself to things of light from infancy;  
 And thus to be cast out, thus lorn to die,  
 Is sure enough to make a mortal man 960  
 Grow impious." So he inwardly began  
 On things for which no wording can be found;  
 Deeper and deeper sinking, until drown'd  
 Beyond the reach of music: for the choir  
 Of Cynthia he heard not, though rough briar 965  
 Nor muffling thicket interpos'd to dull  
 The vesper hymn, far swollen, soft and full,  
 Through the dark pillars of those sylvan aisles.  
 He saw not the two maidens, nor their smiles,  
 Wan as primroses gather'd at midnight  
 By chilly finger'd spring. " Unhappy wight! 970  
 Endymion!" said Peona, " we are here!  
 What wouldst thou ere we all are laid on bier?"  
 Then he embrac'd her, and his lady's hand  
 Press'd, saying: " Sister, I would have command, 975  
 If it were heaven's will, on our sad fate."  
 At which that dark-ey'd stranger stood elate  
 And said, in a new voice, but sweet as love,

(949-50) In the draft —

Until he saw that grove, as if perchance,  
 And then his soul was changed...

(951) The inverted commas are closed after *Ha!* in the first edition; but it is not so in the manuscript; and the matter is set right in the corrected copy.

(955) Cancelled reading of the manuscript, *And by Promethean...* This was probably rejected to get rid of the repetition of the word *by*.

(956) The draft reads *And by old Saturn's single forelock...*

(967) The draft reads *prelude* for *vesper*.

(968) It is worth noting that, when writing out the fair copy, Keats made three several attempts to spell this word *aisles* rightly, having first written it *isles*, then *ails* and lastly *aisles*.

(974-7) The draft reads as follows: —

Her brother kiss'd her, and his lady's hand  
 Saying, " Sweet sister I would have command,  
 If it were heaven's will, on our sad fate."  
 Then that dark-tressed stranger stood elate...

To Endymien's amaze: "By Cupid's dove,  
 And so thou shalt! and by the lilly truth 980  
 Of my own breast thou shalt, beloved youth!"  
 And as she spake, into her face there came  
 Light, as reflected from a silver flame:  
 Her long black hair swell'd ampler, in display  
 Full golden; in her eyes a brighter day 985  
 Dawn'd blue and full of love. Aye, he beheld  
 Phœbe, his passion! joyous she upheld  
 Her lucid bow, continuing thus: "Drear, drear  
 Has our delaying been; but foolish fear  
 Withheld me first; and then decrees of fate; 990  
 And then 'twas fit that from this mortal state  
 Thou shouldst, my love, by some unlook'd for change  
 Be spiritualiz'd. Peona, we shall range  
 These forests, and to thee they safe shall be  
 As was thy cradle: hither shalt thou flee 995  
 To meet us many a time." Next Cynthia bright  
 Peona kiss'd, and bless'd with fair good night:  
 Her brother kiss'd her too, and knelt adown  
 Before his goddess, in a blissful swoon.  
 She gave her fair hands to him, and behold, 1000  
 Before three swiftest kisses he had told,  
 They vanish'd far away! — Peona went



LAMIA,  
ISABELLA,  
THE EVE OF ST. AGNES,  
AND  
OTHER POEMS.

---

BY JOHN KEATS,  
AUTHOR OF ENDYMION.

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LONDON:  
PRINTED FOR TAYLOR AND HESSEY,  
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1820.





## ADVERTISEMENT.

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IF any apology be thought necessary for the appearance of the unfinished poem of *HYPERION*, the publishers beg to state that they alone are responsible, as it was printed at their particular request, and contrary to the wish of the author. The poem was intended to have been of equal length with *ENDYMION*, but the reception given to that work discouraged the author from proceeding.

*Fleet-Street, June 26, 1820.*

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[Keats's third and last book, issued in the summer of 1820, is a duodecimo, put up in stout drab boards similar to those of *Endymion*, with a back label *Lamia, Isabella, &c.* 7s. 6d. It consists of fly-title with imprint on verso, "LONDON: PRINTED BY THOMAS DAVISON, WHITEFRIARS," title-page, Advertisement, and Contents, as given opposite, and pages 1 to 199, including the fly-titles to *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes*, the miscellaneous Poems, and *Hyperion*, all as reproduced in the following pages. There are head-lines in Roman capitals running throughout each section, recto and verso alike, (1) *Lamia*, (2) *Isabella*, (3) *Eve of St. Agnes*, (4) *Poems*, and (5) *Hyperion*. The pages are numbered in the usual way with Arabic figures; and in *Lamia* and *Hyperion* the Parts and Books are marked at the inner side of the head-line in smaller Roman capitals. On the verso of page 199, the imprint of Davison is repeated; and there are eight pages of Taylor and Hessey's advertisements, beginning with one of *Endymion*. Leigh Hunt's review of this volume filled *The Indicator* for the 2nd and 9th of August, 1820, and is reprinted as an Appendix in this edition of Keats's Work. A large part of the contents of the volume still exists in manuscript. Each manuscript that I have seen will be found referred to in its place. — H. B. F.]



On the 12th of July 1819 Keats wrote to Reynolds that he had "proceeded pretty well with 'Lamia,' finishing the first part, which consists of about four hundred lines." He adds, "I have great hopes of success, because I make use of my judgment more deliberately than I yet have done; but in case of failure with the world, I shall find my content." Lord Houghton records, on the authority of Charles Armitage Brown, that *Lamia* "had been in hand some time," and that Keats wrote it "with great care, after much study of Dryden's versification." In August Keats wrote to Baily from Winchester, mentioning the "half-finished" *Lamia* among recent work. On the 5th of September 1819 he wrote to Taylor that he had finished *Lamia* since finishing "the tragedy" (*Otho the Great*). The manuscript of *Lamia* consists of seventy-six leaves, foolscap folio, generally written upon one side only. It is a carefully written manuscript, finally revised for the press, and shows unmis-

# LAMIA.

## PART I.

UPON a time, before the faery broods  
Drove Nymph and Satyr from the prosperous woods,  
Before King Oberon's bright diadem,  
Sceptre, and mantle, clasp'd with dewy gem, 5  
Frighted away the Dryads and the Fauns  
From rushes green, and brakes, and cowslip'd lawns,  
The ever-smitten Hermes empty left  
His golden throne, bent warm on amorous theft :  
From high Olympus had he stolen light, 10  
On this side of Jove's clouds, to escape the sight  
Of his great summoner, and made retreat  
Into a forest on the shores of Crete.  
For somewhere in that sacred island dwelt  
A nymph, to whom all hoofed Satyrs knelt ; 15  
At whose white feet the languid Tritons poured  
Pearls, while on land they wither'd and adored.  
Fast by the springs where she to bathe was wont,  
And in those meads where sometime she might haunt,  
Were strewn rich gifts, unknown to any Muse,  
Though Fancy's casket were unlock'd to choose. 20  
Ah, what a world of love was at her feet !  
So Hermes thought, and a celestial heat  
Burnt from his winged heels to either ear,  
That from a whiteness, as the lilly clear,  
Blush'd into roses 'mid his golden hair, 25  
Fallen in jealous curls about his shoulders bare.

From vale to vale, from wood to wood, he flew,  
Breathing upon the flowers his passion new,  
And wound with many a river to its head,  
To find where this sweet nymph prepar'd her secret bed : 30

---

(4) The manuscript shows a cancelled reading, *sandals* for *mantle*.  
(15) Cancelled manuscript reading, *And at whose feet*.

In vain ; the sweet nymph might nowhere be found,  
 And so he rested, on the lonely ground,  
 Pensive, and full of painful jealousies  
 Of the Wood-Gods, and even the very trees.  
 There as he stood, he heard a mournful voice, 35  
 Such as once heard, in gentle heart, destroys  
 All pain but pity : thus the lone voice spake :  
 " When from this wreathed tomb shall I awake !  
 " When move in a sweet body fit for life,  
 " And love, and pleasure, and the ruddy strife, 40  
 " Of hearts and lips ! Ah, miserable me !"  
 The God, dove-footed, glided silently  
 Round bush and tree, soft-brushing, in his speed,  
 The taller grasses and full-flowering weed,  
 Until he found a palpitating snake, 45  
 Bright, and cirque-couchant in a dusky brake.

She was a gordian shape of dazzling hue,  
 Vermilion-spotted, golden, green, and blue ;  
 Strip'd like a zebra, freckled like a pard,  
 Ey'd like a peacock, and all crimson barr'd ; 50  
 And full of silver moons, that, as she breathed,  
 Dissolv'd, or brighter shone, or interwreathed  
 Their lustras with the gloomier tapestries.



And thus ; while Hermes on his pinions lay,  
Like a stoop'd falcon ere he takes his prey.

“ Fair Hermes, crown'd with feathers, fluttering light,  
“ I had a splendid dream of thee last night :  
“ I saw thee sitting, on a throne of gold, 70  
“ Among the Gods, upon Olympus old,  
“ The only sad one ; for thou didst not hear  
“ The soft, lute-finger'd Muses chaunting clear,  
“ Nor even Apollo when he sang alone,  
“ Deaf to his throbbing throat's long, long melodious moan. 75  
“ I dreamt I saw thee, rob'd in purple flakes,  
“ Break amorous through the clouds, as morning breaks,  
“ And, swiftly as a bright Phœbean dart,  
“ Strike for the Cretan isle ; and here thou art !  
“ Too gentle Hermes, hast thou found the maid ? ” 80  
Whereat the star of Lethe not delay'd  
His rosy eloquence, and thus inquired :  
“ Thou smooth-lipped serpent, surely high inspired !  
“ Thou beauteous wreath, with melancholy eyes,  
“ Possess whatever bliss thou canst devise, 85  
“ Telling me only where my nymph is fled, —  
“ Where she doth breathe ! ” “ Bright planet, thou hast said, ”  
Returned the snake, “ but seal with oaths, fair God ! ”  
“ I swear, ” said Hermes, “ by my serpent crown,  
“ And by thine eyes, and by thy starry crown ! ” 90  
Light flew his earnest words, among the blossoms blown.  
Then thus again the brilliance feminine :  
“ Too frail of heart ! for this lost nymph of thine,  
“ Free as the air, invisibly, she strays  
“ About these thornless wilds ; her pleasant days 95  
“ She tastes unseen ; unseen her nimble feet  
“ Leave traces in the grass and flowers sweet ;  
“ From weary tendrils, and bow'd branches green,  
“ She plucks the fruit unseen, she bathes unseen :  
“ And by my power is her beauty veil'd 100  
“ To keep it unaffronted, unassail'd

(69) The manuscript reads *silver* for *splendid*.

(78) In the manuscript —

And, swiftly as a mission'd phœbean dart,

a reading which shifts the accent from the second to the first syllable of the word *Phœbean*.

(93) Cancelled manuscript reading, *Superb of heart!*

“ By the love-glances of unlovely eyes,  
 “ Of Satyrs, Fauns, and blear’d Silenus’ sighs.  
 “ Pale grew her immortality, for woe  
 “ Of all these lovers, and she grieved so 105  
 “ I took compassion on her, bade her steep  
 “ Her hair in weird syrops, that would keep  
 “ Her loveliness invisible, yet free  
 “ To wander as she loves, in liberty.  
 “ Thou shalt behold her, Hermes, thou alone, 110  
 “ If thou wilt, as thou swearest, grant my boon ! ”  
 Then, once again, the charmed God began  
 An oath, and through the serpent’s ears it ran  
 Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.  
 Ravish’d, she lifted her Circean head, 115  
 Blush’d a live damask, and swift-lisping said,  
 “ I was a woman, let me have once more  
 “ A woman’s shape, and charming as before.  
 “ I love a youth of Corinth — O the bliss !  
 “ Give me my woman’s form, and place me where he is. 120  
 “ Stoop, Hermes, let me breathe upon thy brow,  
 “ And thou shalt see thy sweet nymph even now.”  
 The God on half-shut feathers sank serene,  
 She breath’d upon his eyes, and swift was seen  
 Of both the guarded nymph near-smiling on the green. 125

And towards her step : she, like a moon in wane,  
 Faded before him, cower'd, nor could restrain  
 Her fearful sobs, self-folding like a flower  
 That faints into itself at evening hour :  
 But the God fostering her chilled hand 140  
 She felt the warmth, her eyelids open'd bland,  
 And, like new flowers at morning song of bees,  
 Bloom'd, and gave up her honey to the lees.  
 Into the green-recessed woods they flew ;  
 Nor grew they pale, as mortal lovers do. 145

Left to herself, the serpent now began  
 To change ; her elfin blood in madness ran,  
 Her mouth foam'd, and the grass, therewith besprent,  
 Wither'd at dew so sweet and virulent ;  
 Her eyes in torture fix'd, and anguish drear, 150  
 Hot, glaz'd, and wide, with lid-lashes all sear,  
 Flash'd phosphor and sharp sparks, without one cooling tear.  
 The colours all inflam'd throughout her train,  
 She writh'd about, convuls'd with scarlet pain :  
 A deep volcanian yellow took the place 155  
 Of all her milder-mooned body's grace ;  
 And, as the lava ravishes the mead,  
 Spoilt all her silver mail, and golden brede ;  
 Made gloom of all her frecklings, streaks and bars,  
 Eclips'd her crescents, and lick'd up her stars : 160  
 So that, in moments few, she was undrest  
 Of all her sapphires, greens, and amethyst,  
 And rubious-argent : of all these bereft,  
 Nothing but pain and ugliness were left.  
 Still shone her crown ; that vanish'd, also she 165  
 Melted and disappear'd as suddenly ;  
 And in the air, her new voice luting soft,  
 Cry'd, " Lycius ! gentle Lycius ! " — Borne a'oft  
 With the bright mists about the mountains hoar  
 These words dissolv'd : Crete's forests heard no more. 170

(142) Cancelled manuscript reading, *And she like flowers...*

(155) The manuscript reads *vulcanian*, the first edition *volcanian*. It seems to me more likely that the manuscript accords with the poet's intention than that the printed text does, for this old orthography is the more characteristic of the vocabulary of this particular poem, as introducing the more conspicuously the mythic personal origin of the common noun *volcano* or *vulcano*.

(167-8) The manuscript reads —

And her new voice, soft luting in the air  
 Cried " Lycius ! gentle Lycius, where, ah where ! "

Whither fled Lamia, now a lady bright,  
 A full-born beauty new and exquisite?  
 She fled into that valley they pass o'er  
 Who go to Corinth from Cenchreas' shore ;  
 And rested at the foot of those wild hills, 175  
 The rugged founts of the Peræan rills,  
 And of that other ridge whose barren back  
 Stretches, with all its mist and cloudy rack,  
 South-westward to Cleone. There she stood  
 About a young bird's flutter from a wood, 180  
 Fair, on a sloping green of mossy tread,  
 By a clear pool, wherein she passioned  
 To see herself escap'd from so sore ills,  
 While her robes flaunted with the daffodils.

Ah, happy Lycius !— for she was a maid 185  
 More beautiful than ever twisted braid,  
 Or sigh'd, or blush'd, or on spring-flowered lea  
 Spread a green kirtle to the minstrelsy :  
 A virgin purest-lipp'd, yet in the lore  
 Of love deep learned to the red heart's core : 190  
 Not one hour old, yet of scintial brain  
 To unperplex bliss from its neighbour pain ;  
 Define their rattish limits, and estrange



Sweet days a lovely graduate, still unshent,  
And kept his rosy terms in idle languishment.

Why this fair creature chose so faerily 200  
By the wayside to linger, we shall see;  
But first 'tis fit to tell how she could muse  
And dream, when in the serpent prison-house,  
Of all she list, strange or magnificent:  
How, ever, where she will'd, her spirit went; 205  
Whether to faint Elysium, or where  
Down through tress-lifting waves the Nereids fair  
Wind into Thetis' bower by many a pearly stair;  
Or where God Bacchus drains his cups divine,  
Stretch'd out, at ease, beneath a glutinous pine; 210  
Or where in Pluto's gardens palatine  
Mulciber's columns gleam in far piazzian line.  
And sometimes into cities she would send  
Her dream, with feast and rioting to blend;  
And once, while among mortals dreaming thus, 215  
She saw the young Corinthian Lycius  
Charioting foremost in the envious race,  
Like a young Jove with calm uneager face,  
And fell into a swooning love of him.  
Now on the moth-time of that evening dim 220  
He would return that way, as well she knew,  
To Corinth from the shore; for freshly blew  
The eastern soft wind, and his galley now  
Grated the quaystones with her brazen prow  
In port Cenchreas, from Egina isle 225  
Fresh anchor'd; whither he had been awhile  
To sacrifice to Jove, whose temple there  
Waits with high marble doors for blood and incense rare.  
Jove heard his vows, and better'd his desire;  
For by some freakful chance he made retire 230  
From his companions, and set forth to walk,  
Perhaps grown wearied of their Corinth talk;  
Over the solitary hills he fared,  
Thoughtless at first, but ere eve's star appeared

(198) Compare with this line Tennyson's now constantly quoted phrase, *sweet girl-graduates*, in the Prologue to *The Princess*.

(212) The words *far Piazzian line* were written in the first instance; but *far* was struck out in favour of *long*. As *far* stands in the first edition, I presume Keats restored it on reconsideration.

(225) Originally, *In harbour Cenchreas*, altered with the same result as regards the accent as in line 174.



His phantasy was lost, where reason fades, 235  
 In the calm'd twilight of Platonic shades.  
 Lamia beheld him coming, near, more near —  
 Close to her passing, in indifference drear,  
 His silent sandals swept the mossy green ;  
 So neighbour'd to him, and yet so unseen 240  
 She stood : he pass'd, shut up in mysteries,  
 His mind wrapp'd like his mantle, while her eyes  
 Follow'd his steps, and her neck regal white  
 Turn'd — syllabing thus, “ Ah, Lycius bright,  
 ‘ And will you leave me on the hills alone? 245  
 ‘ Lycius, look back ! and be some pity shown.”  
 He did ; not with cold wonder fearingly,  
 But Orpheus-like at an Eurydice ;  
 For so delicious were the words she sung,  
 It seem'd he had lov'd them a whole summer long : 250  
 And soon his eyes had drunk her beauty up,  
 Leaving no drop in the bewildering cup,  
 And still the cup was full, — while he, afraid  
 Lest she should vanish ere his lip had paid  
 Due adoration, thus began to adore ; 255  
 Her soft look growing coy, she saw his chain so sure :  
 ‘ Leave thee alone ! Look back ! Ah, Goddess, see  
 ‘ Whether my eyes can ever turn from thee !



" For pity do not melt ! " — " If I should stay,"  
 Said Lamia, " here, upon this floor of clay,  
 " And pain my steps upon these flowers too rough,  
 " What canst thou say or do of charm enough  
 " To dull the nice remembrance of my home? 275  
 " Thou canst not ask me with thee here to roam  
 " Over these hills and vales, where no joy is,—  
 " Empty of immortality and bliss !  
 " Thou art a scholar, Lycius, and must know  
 " That finer spirits cannot breathe below 280  
 " In human climes, and live : Alas ! poor youth,  
 " What taste of purer air hast thou to soothe  
 " My essence? What serener palaces,  
 " Where I may all my many senses please,  
 " And by mysterious sleights a hundred thirsts appease? 285  
 " It cannot be — Adieu ! " So said, she rose  
 " Tiptoe with white arms spread. He, sick to lose  
 The amorous promise of her lone complain,  
 Swoon'd, murmuring of love, and pale with pain.  
 The cruel lady, without any show 290  
 Of sorrow for her tender favourite's woe,  
 But rather, if her eyes could brighter be,  
 With brighter eyes and slow amenity,  
 Put her new lips to his, and gave afresh  
 The life she had so tangled in her mesh : 295  
 And as he from one trance was wakening  
 Into another, she began to sing,  
 Happy in beauty, life, and love, and every thing,  
 A song of love, too sweet for earthly lyres,  
 While, like held breath, the stars drew in their panting fires 300  
 And then she whisper'd in such trembling tone,  
 As those who, safe together met alone  
 For the first time through many anguish'd days,  
 Use other speech than looks ; bidding him raise  
 His drooping head, and clear his soul of doubt, 305  
 For that she was a woman, and without  
 Any more subtle fluid in her veins  
 Than throbbing blood, and that the self-same pains  
 Inhabited her frail-strung heart as his.

(272) In the manuscript the word *here* does not occur in this line.

(287) Alternative readings of the manuscript, *Tiptoe with white spread arms*, and *On tiptoe with white arms*.

(303) The manuscript reads *though* for *through*.

(308) Cancelled manuscript reading, *Than throbb'd in his*.

And next she wonder'd how his eyes could miss                     310  
 Her face so long in Corinth, where, she said,  
 She dwelt but half retir'd, and there had led  
 Days happy as the gold coin could invent  
 Without the aid of love; yet in content  
 Till she saw him, as once she pass'd him by,                     315  
 Where 'gainst a column he leant thoughtfully  
 At Venus' temple porch, 'mid baskets heap'd  
 Of amorous herbs and flowers, newly reap'd  
 Late on that eve, as 'twas the night before  
 The Adonian feast; whereof she saw no more,                     320  
 But wept alone those days, for why should she adore?  
 Lycius from death awoke into amaze,  
 To see her still, and singing so sweet lays;  
 Then from amaze into delight he fell  
 To hear her whisper woman's lore so well;                     325  
 And every word she spake entic'd him on  
 To unperplex'd delight and pleasure known.  
 Let the mad poets say whate'er they please  
 Of the sweets of Faeries, Peris, Goddesses,  
 There is not such a treat among them all,                     330  
 Haunters of cavern, lake, and waterfall,  
 As a real woman, lineal indeed  
 From Pyrrha's pebbles or old Adam's seed

As men talk in a dream, so Corinth all, 350  
 Throughout her palaces imperial,  
 And all her populous streets and temples lewd,  
 Mutter'd, like tempest in the distance brew'd,  
 To the wide-spreaded night above her towers.  
 Men, women, rich and poor, in the cool hours, 355  
 Shuffled their sandals o'er the pavement white,  
 Companion'd or alone; while many a light  
 Flar'd, here and there, from wealthy festivals,  
 And threw their moving shadows on the walls,  
 Or found them cluster'd in the cornic'd shade 360  
 Of some arch'd temple door, or dusky colonnade.

Muffling his face, of greeting friends in fear,  
 Her fingers he press'd hard, as one came near  
 With curl'd gray beard, sharp eyes, and smooth bald crown,  
 Slow-stepp'd, and rob'd in philosophic gown: 365  
 Lycius shrank closer, as they met and past,  
 Into his mantle, adding wings to haste,  
 While hurried Lamia trembled: "Ah," said he,  
 "Why do you shudder, love, so ruefully?  
 "Why does your tender palm dissolve in dew?" — 370  
 "I'm wearied," said fair Lamia: "tell me who  
 "Is that old man? I cannot bring to mind  
 "His features: — Lycius! wherefore did you blind  
 "Yourself from his quick eyes?" Lycius reply'd,  
 "'Tis Apollonius sage, my trusty guide 375  
 "And good instructor; but to-night he seems  
 "The ghost of folly haunting my sweet dreams."

While yet he spake they had arriv'd before  
 A pillar'd porch, with lofty portal door,  
 Where hung a silver lamp, whose phosphor glow 380  
 Reflected in the slabbed steps below,  
 Mild as a star in water; for so new,

(363) The manuscript reads —

And pressing hard her fingers, one came near...

(371) The manuscript has *pray who* instead of *tell me who*.

(373) In the manuscript, *why did you so blind...*

(377) The closing inverted commas, wanting in the first edition, appear in the manuscript.

(378) The manuscript reads —

A royal-squared lofty portal door.

And so unsully'd was the marble's hue,  
 So through the crystal polish, liquid fine,  
 Ran the dark veins, that none but feet divine                   385  
 Could e'er have touch'd there. Sounds Æolian  
 Breath'd from the hinges, as the ample span  
 Of the wide doors disclos'd a place unknown  
 Some time to any, but those two alone,  
 And a few Persian mutes, who that same year                   390  
 Were seen about the markets: none knew where  
 They could inhabit; the most curious  
 Were foil'd, who watch'd to trace them to their house:  
 And but the flitter-winged verse must tell,  
 For truth's sake, what woe afterwards befel,                   395  
 Twould humour many a heart to leave them thus,  
 Shut from the busy world of more incredulous.

383) This line was originally written thus —

And so unsullid was the marble's hue,  
 afterwards altered to

And so unsullid did the marble shew,

either Keats or his publisher gave the preference to the first reading, which never appeared in the first edition with a blemish: the apostrophe and *s* taken for the sake of the second reading were not put in again in reverting to the first.

386) The manuscript reads *æolian*; the first edition *Æolian*.

## L A M I A .

### PART II.

**L**OVE in a hut, with water and a crust,  
Is — Love, forgive us! — cinders, ashes, dust ;  
Love in a palace is perhaps at last  
More grievous torment than a hermit's fast : —  
That is a doubtful tale from faery land, 5  
Hard for the non-elect to understand.  
Had Lycius liv'd to hand his story down,  
He might have given the moral a fresh frown,  
Or clench'd it quite : but too short was their bliss  
To breed distrust and hate, that make the soft voice hiss. 10  
Besides, there, nightly, with terrific glare,  
Love, jealous grown of so complete a pair,  
Hover'd and buzz'd his wings, with fearful roar,  
Above the lintel of their chamber door,  
And down the passage cast a glow upon the floor. 15

For all this came a ruin : side by side  
They were enthroned, in the even tide,  
Upon a couch, near to a curtaining  
Whose airy texture, from a golden string,  
Floated into the room, and let appear 20  
Unveil'd the summer heaven, blue and clear,  
Betwixt two marble shafts : — there they reposed,  
Where use had made it sweet, with eyelids closed,  
Saving a tythe which love still open kept,  
That they might see each other while they almost slept ; 25  
When from the slope side of a suburb hill,  
Deafening the swallow's twitter, came a thrill  
Of trumpets — Lycius started — the sounds fled,  
But left a thought, a buzzing in his head.  
For the first time, since first he harbour'd in 30  
That purple-lined palace of sweet sin,

---

(10) The manuscript reads *makes for make*.

His spirit pass'd beyond its golden bourn  
 Into the noisy world almost forsworn.  
 The lady, ever watchful, penetrant,  
 Saw this with pain, so arguing a want 35  
 Of something more, more than her empery  
 Of joys; and she began to moan and sigh  
 Because he mus'd beyond her, knowing well  
 That but a moment's thought is passion's passing bell.  
 "Why do you sigh, fair creature?" whisper'd he: 40  
 "Why do you think?" return'd she tenderly:  
 "You have deserted me; — where am I now?  
 "Not in your heart while care weighs on your brow:  
 "No, no, you have dismiss'd me; and I go  
 "From your breast houseless: aye, it must be so." 45  
 He answer'd, bending to her open eyes,  
 Where he was mirror'd small in paradise,  
 "My silver planet, both of eve and morn!  
 "Why will you plead yourself so sad forlorn,  
 "While I am striving how to fill my heart 50  
 "With deeper crimson, and a double smart?  
 "How to entangle, trammel up and snare  
 "Your soul in mine, and labyrinth you there  
 "Like the hid scent in an unbudded rose?  
 "Aye, a sweet kiss — you see your mighty woes. 55



Of sorrows at his words; at last with pain  
 Beseeching him, the while his hand she wrung,  
 To change his purpose. He thereat was stung,  
 Perverse, with stronger fancy to reclaim 70  
 Her wild and timid nature to his aim :  
 Besides, for all his love, in self despite,  
 Against his better self, he took delight  
 Luxurious in her sorrows, soft and new.  
 His passion, cruel grown, took on a hue 75  
 Fierce and sanguineous as 'twas possible  
 In one whose brow had no dark veins to swell.  
 Fine was the mitigated fury, like  
 Apollo's presence when in act to strike  
 The serpent — Ha, the serpent! certes, she 80  
 Was none. She burnt, she lov'd the tyranny,

(67) Cancelled manuscript reading, *at his purpose for at his words.*

(81) In the manuscript, in place of lines 82 to 105, the following were originally written:

Became herself a flame — 'twas worth an age  
 Of minor joys to revel in such rage.  
 She was persuaded, and she fixt the hour  
 When he should make a Bride of his fair Paramour.  
 After the hot [t]est day comes languidest  
 The colour'd Eve, half-hidden in the west;  
 So they both look'd, so spake, if breathed sound,  
 That almost silence is, hath ever found  
 Compare with nature's quiet. Which lov'd most,  
 Which had the weakest, strongest, heart so lost,  
 So ruin'd, wreck'd, destroy'd: for certes they  
 Scarcely could tell they could not guess  
 Whether 'twas misery or happiness.  
 Spells are but made to break. Whisper'd the Youth  
 "Sure some sweet name thou hast; though by my truth  
 "I had not ask'd it, ever thinking thee  
 "Not mortal but of heavenly progeny,  
 "As still I do. Hast any mortal name?  
 "Fit silver appellation for this dazzling frame?  
 "Or friends, or kinsfolks on the citied Earth,  
 "To share our marriage feast and nuptial mirth?"  
 "I have no friends," said Lamia "as you list  
 "Intreat your many guests." Then all was wist  
 She fell asleep, and Lycius to the Shade  
 Of deep sleep in a moment was betray'd.

Before this was all struck out and remodelled according to the text, Keats cancelled from *as you list*, and wrote in

no not one;  
 My presence in wide Corinth is unknown;

and the next six lines as in the text, adding —

With any pleasure on me, summon not  
 Old Apollonius. Lycius ignorant what  
 Strange thought had led her to an end so blank,

and so on as in the text, lines 103-5.



And, all subdu'd, consented to the hour  
 When to the bridal he should lead his paramour.  
 Whispering in midnight silence, said the youth,  
 " Sure some sweet name thou hast, though, by my truth,      85  
 " I have not ask'd it, ever thinking thee  
 " Not mortal, but of heavenly progeny,  
 " As still I do. Hast any mortal name,  
 " Fit appellation for this dazzling frame?  
 " Or friends or kinsfolk on the citted earth,      90  
 " To share our marriage feast and nuptial mirth?"  
 " I have no friends," said Lamia, " no, not one;  
 " My presence in wide Corinth hardly known:  
 " My parents' bones are in their dusty urns  
 " Sepulchred, where no kindled incense burns,      95  
 " Seeing all their luckless race are dead, save me,  
 " And I neglect the holy rite for thee.  
 " Even as you list invite your many guests;  
 " But if, as now it seems, your vision rests  
 " With any pleasure on me, do not bid      100  
 " Old Apollonius — from him keep me hid."  
 Lycius, perplex'd at words so blind and blank,  
 Made close inquiry; from whose touch she shrank,  
 Feigning a sleep; and he to the dull shade  
 Of deep sleep in a moment was betray'd.      105

Came, and who were her subtle servitors.  
 About the halls, and to and from the doors,  
 There was a noise of wings, till in short space 120  
 The glowing banquet-room shone with wide-arched grace.  
 A haunting music, sole perhaps and lone  
 Supportress of the faery-roof, made moan  
 Throughout, as fearful the whole charm might fade.  
 Fresh carved cedar, mimicking a glade 125  
 Of palm and plantain, met from either side,  
 High in the midst, in honor of the bride:  
 Two palms and then two plantains, and so on,  
 From either side their stems branch'd one to one  
 All down the aisled place; and beneath all 130  
 There ran a stream of lamps straight on from wall to wall.  
 So canopy'd, lay an untasted feast  
 Teeming with odours. Lamia, regal drest,  
 Silently pac'd about, and as she went,  
 In pale contented sort of discontent, 135  
 Mission'd her viewless servants to enrich  
 The fretted splendour of each nook and niche.  
 Between the tree-stems, marbled plain at first,  
 Came jasper pannels; then, anon, there burst  
 Forth creeping imagery of slighter trees, 140  
 And with the larger wove in small intricacies.  
 Approving all, she faded at self-will,  
 And shut the chamber up, close, hush'd and still,  
 Complete and ready for the revels rude,  
 When dreadful guests would come to spoil her solitude. 145

The day appear'd, and all the gossip rout.  
 O senseless Lycius! Madman! wherefore flout  
 The silent-blessing fate, warm cloister'd hours,  
 And show to common eyes these secret bowers?  
 The herd approach'd; each guest, with busy brain, 150  
 Arriving at the portal, gaz'd amain,

(121) Cancelled manuscript reading, *high-lamp'd* for *glowing*.

(122-4) Hunt notes (see Appendix) — "This is the very quintessence of the romantic."

(133) Cancelled manuscript readings, *Teeming a perfume*, and *Teeming wing'd odours*.

(138) Rejected reading, *wainscoated* for *marbled plain*.

(146) In the manuscript the words *came soon* are struck out in favour of *appear'd*.

(150) The manuscript reads *The Herd arriv'd*, the word *arriv'd* being substituted for *came*, and.

And enter'd marveling: for they knew the street,  
 Remember'd it from childhood all complete  
 Without a gap, yet ne'er before had seen  
 That royal porch, that high-built fair demesne; 155  
 So in they hurried all, maz'd, curious and keen:  
 Save one, who look'd thereon with eye severe,  
 And with calm-planted steps walk'd in austere;  
 'Twas Apollonius: something too he laugh'd,  
 As though some knotty problem, that had daft 160  
 His patient thought, had now begun to thaw,  
 And solve and melt: — 'twas just as he foresaw.

He met within the murmurous vestibule  
 His young disciple. " 'Tis no common rule,  
 " Lycius," said he, " for uninvited guest 165  
 " To force himself upon you, and infest  
 " With an unbidden presence the bright throng  
 " Of younger friends; yet must I do this wrong,  
 " And you forgive me." Lycius blush'd, and led  
 The old man through the inner doors broad-spread; 170  
 With reconciling words and courteous mien  
 Turning into sweet milk the sophist's spleen.

Twelve sphered tables, by silk seats inspher'd,  
 High as the level of a man's breast rear'd  
 On libbard's paws, upheld the heavy gold  
 Of cups and goblets, and the store thrice told  
 Of Ceres' horn, and, in huge vessels, wine  
 Come from the gloomy tun with merry shine.  
 Thus loaded with a feast the tables stood,  
 Each shrining in the midst the image of a God.

185

190

When in an antichamber every guest  
 Had felt the cold full sponge to pleasure press'd,  
 By minist'ring slaves, upon his hands and feet,  
 And fragrant oils with ceremony meet  
 Pour'd on his hair, they all mov'd to the feast  
 In white robes, and themselves in order plac'd  
 Around the silken couches, wondering  
 Whence all this mighty cost and blaze of wealth could spring.

195

Soft went the music the soft air along,  
 While fluent Greek a vowel'd undersong  
 Kept up among the guests, discoursing low  
 At first, for scarcely was the wine at flow;  
 But when the happy vintage touch'd their brains,  
 Louder they talk, and louder come the strains  
 Of powerful instruments: — the gorgeous dyes,  
 The space, the splendour of the draperies,  
 The roof of awful richness, nectarous cheer,  
 Beautiful slaves, and Lamia's self, appear,  
 Now, when the wine has done its rosy deed,  
 And every soul from human trammels freed,  
 No more so strange; for merry wine, sweet wine,  
 Will make Elysian shades not too fair, too divine.  
 Soon was God Bacchus at meridian height;  
 Flush'd were their cheeks, and bright eyes double bright:  
 Garlands of every green, and every scent  
 From vales deflower'd, or forest-trees branch-rent,  
 In baskets of bright osier'd gold were brought  
 High as the handles heap'd, to suit the thought

200

205

210

215

(203) Cancelled reading, *Sicilian vintage*.

(218-19) Cancelled reading —

High as the handles heap'd, of every sort  
 Of fragrant wreath, that each as he did please..

Of every guest ; that each, as he did please,  
Might fancy-fit his brows, silk-pillow'd at his ease. 220

What wreath for Lamia? What for Lycius?  
What for the sage, old Apollonius?  
Upon her aching forehead be there hung  
The leaves of willow and of adder's tongue ;  
And for the youth, quick, let us strip for him 225

The thyrsus, that his watching eyes may swim  
Into forgetfulness ; and, for the sage,  
Let spear-grass and the spiteful thistle wage  
War on his temples. Do not all charms fly  
At the mere touch of cold philosophy? 230

There was an awful rainbow once in heaven :  
We know her woof, her texture ; she is given  
In the dull catalogue of common things.  
Philosophy will clip an Angel's wings,  
Conquer all mysteries by rule and line, 235

Empty the haunted air, and gnomed mine —  
Unweave a rainbow, as it erewhile made  
The tender-person'd Lamia melt into a shade.

By her glad Lycius sitting, in chief place,  
Scarce saw in all the room another face. 240

'Twas icy, and the cold ran through his veins;  
 Then sudden it grew hot, and all the pains  
 Of an unnatural heat shot to his heart.  
 "Lamia, what means this? Wherefore dost thou start?  
 "Know'st thou that man?" Poor Lamia answer'd not. 255  
 He gaz'd into her eyes, and not a jot  
 Own'd they the lovelorn piteous appeal:  
 More, more he gaz'd: his human senses reel:  
 Some hungry spell that loveliness absorbs;  
 There was no recognition in those orbs. 260  
 "Lamia!" he cry'd — and no soft-ton'd reply.  
 The many heard, and the loud revelry  
 Grew hush; the stately music no more breathes;  
 The myrtle sicken'd in a thousand wreaths.  
 By faint degrees, voice, lute, and pleasure ceased; 265  
 A deadly silence step by step increased,  
 Until it seem'd a horrid presence there,  
 And not a man but felt the terror in his hair.  
 "Lamia!" he shriek'd; and nothing but the shriek  
 With its sad echo did the silence break. 270  
 "Begone, foul dream!" he cry'd, gazing again  
 In the bride's face, where now no azure vein  
 Wander'd on fair-spac'd temples; no soft bloom  
 Misted the cheek; no passion to illumine  
 The deep-recessed vision: — all was blight;  
 Lamia, no longer fair, there sat a deadly white. 275  
 "Shut, shut those juggling eyes, thou ruthless man!  
 "Turn them aside, wretch! or the righteous ban  
 "Of all the Gods, whose dreadful images  
 "Here represent their shadowy presences, 280  
 "May pierce them on the sudden with the thorn  
 "Of painful blindness; leaving thee forlorn,  
 "In trembling dotage to the feeblest fright  
 "Of conscience, for their long offended might,  
 "For all thine impious proud-heart sophistries, 285  
 "Unlawful magic, and enticing lies.  
 "Corinthians! look upon that grey-beard wretch!  
 "Mark how, possess'd, his lashless eyelids stretch  
 "Around his demon eyes! Corinthians, see!  
 "My sweet bride withers at their potency." 290  
 "Fool!" said the sophist, in an under-tone

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(254-5) In the manuscript,


Wherefore dost so start?  
Dost know that Man?

(260) Cancelled reading, *is* for *was*.

Gruff with contempt; which a death-nighing moan  
 From Lycius answer'd, as heart-struck and lost,  
 He sank supine beside the aching ghost.  
 "Fool! Fool!" repeated he, while his eyes still 295  
 Relented not, nor mov'd; "from every ill  
 "Of life have I preserv'd thee to this day,  
 "And shall I see thee made a serpent's prey?"  
 Then Lamia breath'd death breath; the sophist's eye,  
 Like a sharp spear, went through her utterly, 300  
 Keen, cruel, perçant, stinging: she, as well  
 As her weak hand could any meaning tell,  
 Motion'd him to be silent; vainly so,  
 He look'd and look'd again a level — No!  
 "A serpent!" echoed he; no sooner said, 305  
 Than with a frightful scream she vanished:  
 And Lycius' arms were empty of delight,  
 As were his limbs of life, from that same night.  
 On the high couch he lay! — his friends came round —  
 Supported him — no pulse, or breath they found, 310  
 And, in its marriage robe, the heavy body wound.

293-4) In the manuscript —

From Lycius answer'd, as he sunk supine  
 Upon the couch where Lamia's beauties pine,



# ISABELLA ;

OR,

## THE POT OF BASIL.

A STORY FROM BOCCACCIO.

[In a letter to Reynolds dated the 27th of April 1818, Keats says, "I have written for my folio Shakspeare, in which there are the first few stanzas of my 'Pot of Basil.' I have the rest here, finished, and will copy the whole out fair shortly, and George will bring it you. The compliment is paid by us to Boccace, whether we publish or no..." The folio Shakspeare, now in Sir Charles Dilke's hands, contains no stanzas of *Isabella*, so it is to be presumed they were only loose in the book. Again on the 3rd of May 1818, Keats writes to Reynolds, "I have written to George for the first stanzas of my 'Isabel.' I shall have them soon, and will copy the whole out for you." And, in a letter to Bailey dated the 10th of June, he says, "I want to read you my 'Pot of Basil.'" This all points to the recent completion of the poem; and Lord Houghton records on the authority of Brown that it was only just completed when the friends started on their Scotch tour in June. On the 14th of February 1819, he promised to send the poem out to his brother George, with other recent work. It is necessary to be particular about this point, because Leigh Hunt when reviewing *Lamia, Isabella, &c.*, made the unaccountable statement (see Appendix) that the poems in this volume "were almost all written four years ago, when the author was but twenty." The allusion to Boccaccio, Lord Houghton explains by telling us that Keats and Reynolds projected a volume of tales versified from that author. Two by Reynolds were published in *The Garden of Florence, &c.* (1821). In view of the unachieved



## ISABELLA.

Some of joint authorship, the following sentences from the Preface to Reynolds's volume should stand associated with *Isabella*:—

"The stories from Boccacio (The Garden of Florence, and The Eye of Provence) were to have been associated with tales from the same source, intended to have been written by a friend;—but illness on his part, and distracting engagements on mine, prevented from accomplishing our plan at the time; and Death now, to my deep sorrow, has frustrated it for ever! He, who is gone, was one of the very kindest friends I possessed, and yet he was not kinder to me, than to others. His intense mind and powerful imagination would, I truly believe, have done the world some service, had his life been spared—but he was of too sensitive a nature—and thus he was destroyed! One story he completed, and that is to me now the most pathetic poem in existence!"

It is likely enough that Keats copied out *Isabella* as he intended, and the friend who wrote this about it after all was over. But as yet we have not succeeded in tracing any complete manuscript of the poem. Mr. R. A. Potts possesses what would seem to be two fragments of the original draft. This manuscript is of Stanzas xxxix and xl, exclusive of Stanza xxxii; two leaves, one shorter than the other by the length of a stanza, written upon both sides of the paper, and probably having lost stanza xxxii with stanza xxix at the back of it by a stroke of those generous scissors wherewith the manuscripts of Keats were distributed by Severn, formerly the owner



## ISABELLA ;

OR,

### THE POT OF BASIL.

#### I.

**F**AIR Isabel, poor simple Isabel!  
Lorenzo, a young palmer in Love's eye !  
They could not in the self-same mansion dwell  
Without some stir of heart, some malady ;  
They could not sit at meals but feel how well  
It soothed each to be the other by ;  
They could not, sure, beneath the same roof sleep  
But to each other dream, and nightly weep.

#### II.

With every morn their love grew tenderer,  
With every eve deeper and tenderer still ;  
He might not in house, field, or garden stir,  
But her full shape would all his seeing fill ;  
And his continual voice was pleasanter  
To her, than noise of trees or hidden rill ;  
Her lute-string gave an echo of his name,  
She spoilt her half-done broidery with the same.

#### III.

He knew whose gentle hand was at the latch,  
Before the door had given her to his eyes ;  
And from her chamber-window he would catch  
Her beauty farther than the falcon spies ;  
And constant as her vespers would he watch,  
Because her face was turn'd to the same skies ;  
And with sick longing all the night outwear,  
To hear her morning-step upon the stair.

## IV.

A whole long month of May in this sad plight  
Made their cheeks paler by the break of June :  
“ To-morrow will I bow to my delight,  
“ To-morrow will I ask my lady's boon.” —  
“ O may I never see another night,  
“ Lorenzo, if thy lips breathe not love's tune.” —  
So spake they to their pillows ; but, alas,  
Honeyless days and days did he let pass ;

## V.

Until sweet Isabella's untouch'd cheek  
Fell sick within the rose's just domain,  
Fell thin as a young mother's, who doth seek  
By every lull to cool her infant's pain :  
“ How ill she is,” said he, “ I may not speak,  
“ And yet I will, and tell my love all plain :  
“ If looks speak love-laws, I will drink her tears,  
“ And at the least 'twill startle off her cares.”

## VIII.

"O Isabella, I can half perceive  
 "That I may speak my grief into thine ear;  
 "If thou didst ever any thing believe,  
 "Believe how I love thee, believe how near  
 "My soul is to its doom: I would not grieve  
 "Thy hand by unwelcome pressing, would not fear  
 "Thine eyes by gazing; but I cannot live  
 "Another night, and not my passion shrive.

## IX.

"Love! thou art leading me from wintry cold,  
 "Lady! thou ledest me to summer clime,  
 "And I must taste the blossoms that unfold  
 "In its ripe warmth this gracious morning time."  
 So said, his erewhile timid lips grew bold,  
 And poesied with hers in dewy rhyme:  
 Great bliss was with them, and great happiness  
 Grew, like a lusty flower in June's caress.

## X.

Parting they seem'd to tread upon the air,  
 Twin roses by the zephyr blown apart  
 Only to meet again more close, and share  
 The inward fragrance of each other's heart.  
 She, to her chamber gone, a ditty fair  
 Sang, of delicious love and honey'd dart;  
 He with light steps went up a western hill,  
 And bade the sun farewell, and joy'd his fill.

## XI.

All close they met again, before the dusk  
 Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,  
 All close they met, all eves, before the dusk  
 Had taken from the stars its pleasant veil,  
 Close in a bower of hyacinth and musk,  
 Unknown of any, free from whispering tale.  
 Ah! better had it been for ever so,  
 Than idle ears should pleasure in their woe.

## XII.

Were they unhappy then?— It cannot be —  
Too many tears for lovers have been shed,  
Too many sighs give we to them in fee,  
Too much of pity after they are dead,  
Too many doleful stories do we see,  
Whose matter in bright gold were best be read;  
Except in such a page where Theseus' spouse  
Over the pathless waves towards him bows.

## XIII.

But, for the general award of love,  
The little sweet doth kill much bitterness;  
Though Dido silent is in under-grove,  
And Isabella's was a great distress,  
Though young Lorenzo in warm Indian clove  
Was not embalm'd, this truth is not the less  
Even bees, the little almsmen of spring-bowers,  
Know there is richest juice in poison-flowers.

## XVI.

Why were they proud? Because tneir marble founts  
 Gush'd with more pride than do a wretch's tears? —  
 Why were they proud? Because fair orange-mounts  
 Were of more soft ascent than lazar stairs? —  
 Why were they proud? Because red-lin'd accounts  
 Were richer than the songs of Grecian years? —  
 Why were they proud? again we ask aloud,  
 Why in the name of Glory were they proud?

## XVII.

Yet were these Florentines as self-retired  
 In hungry pride and gainful cowardice,  
 As two close Hebrews in that land inspired,  
 Pal'd in and vineyarded from beggar-spies;  
 The hawks of ship-mast forests — the untired  
 And pannier'd mules for ducats and old lies —  
 Quick cat's-paws on the generous stray-away,—  
 Great wits in Spanish, Tuscan, and Malay.

## XVIII.

How was it these same ledger-men could spy  
 Fair Isabella in her downy nest?  
 How could they find out in Lorenzo's eye  
 A straying from his toil? Hot Egypt's pest  
 Into their vision covetous and sly!  
 How could these money-bags see east and west? —  
 Yet so they did — and every dealer fair  
 Must see behind, as doth the hunted hare.

## XIX.

O eloquent and famed Boccaccio!  
 Of thee we now should ask forgiving boon,  
 And of thy spicy myrtles as they blow,  
 And of thy roses amorous of the moon,

---

(XVIII) It may be questioned whether line 5 of this stanza should not begin with *Unto. Into*, however, is the reading of all editions with which I am acquainted.

*ISABELLA.*

And of thy lillies, that do paler grow  
Now they can no more hear thy ghittern's tune,  
For venturing syllables that ill beseem  
The quiet glooms of such a piteous theme.

XX.

Grant thou a pardon here, and then the tale  
Shall move on soberly, as it is meet;  
There is no other crime, no mad assail  
To make old prose in modern rhyme more sweet:  
But it is done — succeed the verse or fail —  
To honour thee, and thy gone spirit greet;  
To stead thee as a verse in English tongue,  
An echo of thee in the north-wind sung.

XXI.

These brethren having found by many signs  
What love Lorenzo for their sister had,  
And how she lov'd him too, each unconfines  
His bitter thoughts to other, well nigh mad  
That he, the servant of their trade designs,  
Should in their sister's love be blithe and glad,



ISABELLA.

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Of the garden-terrace, towards him they bent  
Their footing through the dews; and to him said,  
"You seem there in the quiet of content,  
"Lorenzo, and we are most loth to invade  
"Calm speculation; but if you are wise,  
"Bestride your steed while cold is in the skies.

XXIV.

"To-day we purpose, aye, this hour we mount  
"To spur three leagues towards the Apennine;  
"Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot sun count  
"His dewy rosary on the eglantine."  
Lorenzo, courteously as he was wont,  
Bow'd a fair greeting to these serpents' whine;  
And went in haste, to get in readiness,  
With belt, and spur, and bracing huntsman's dress.

XXV.

And as he to the court-yard pass'd along,  
Each third step did he pause, and listen'd oft  
If he could hear his lady's matin-song,  
Or the light whisper of her footstep soft;  
And as he thus over his passion hung,  
He heard a laugh full musical aloft;  
When, looking up, he saw her features bright  
Smile through an in-door lattice, all delight.

XXVI.

"Love, Isabel!" said he, "I was in pain  
"Lest I should miss to bid thee a good morrow:  
"Ah! what if I should lose thee, when so fain  
"I am to stifle all the heavy sorrow

---

(xxiv) Hunt cites the "exquisite metaphor" of lines 3 and 4 as an instance in which Keats "over-informs the occasion or the speaker." But I doubt whether it is fair to class this kind of "over-informing" as an error. If people of this kind are to be denied one element of poetry, they must be denied another; and it is scarcely more strange to find the vile brethren of Isabella talking in metaphor than to find them talking in rhyme and metre. For the rest, a common-place Italian, even a villainous Italian, feels so intensely the sunlight of his land, that we need not object to the metaphor even on dramatic grounds.



*ISABELLA.*

“Of a poor three hours’ absence? but we’ll gain  
“Out of the amorous dark what day doth borrow.  
“Good bye! I’ll soon be back.” — “Good bye!” said she: —  
And as he went she chanted merrily.

XXVII.

So the two brothers and their murder’d man  
Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno’s stream  
Gurgles through straiten’d banks, and still doth fan  
Itself with dancing bulrush, and the bream  
Keeps head against the freshets. Sick and wan  
The brothers’ faces in the ford did seem,  
Lorenzo’s flush with love. — They pass’d the water  
Into a forest quiet for the slaughter.

XXVIII.

There was Lorenzo slain and buried in,  
There in that forest did his great love cease;  
Ah! when a soul doth thus its freedom win,  
It aches in loneliness — is ill at peace  
As the break-covert blood-hounds of such sin;



## XXX.

She weeps alone for pleasures not to be ;  
 Sorely she wept until the night came on,  
 And then, instead of love, O misery !  
 She brooded o'er the luxury alone :  
 His image in the dusk she seem'd to see,  
 And to the silence made a gentle moan,  
 Spreading her perfect arms upon the air,  
 And on her couch low murmuring " Where? O where? "

## XXXI.

But Selfishness, Love's cousin, held not long  
 Its fiery vigil in her single breast ;  
 She fretted for the golden hour, and hung  
 Upon the time with feverish unrest —  
 Not long — for soon into her heart a throng  
 Of higher occupants, a richer zest,  
 Came tragic ; passion not to be subdu'd,  
 And sorrow for her love in travels rude.

## XXXII.

In the mid days of autumn, on their eyes  
 The breath of Winter comes from far away,  
 And the sick west continually bereaves  
 Of some gold tinge, and plays a roundelay  
 Of death among the bushes and the leaves,  
 To make all bare before he dares to stray  
 From his north cavern. So sweet Isabel  
 By gradual decay from beauty fell,

---

(XXX) The manuscript reads *wept* for *weeps* in line 1; and line 5 stands thus :  
 What might have been too plainly did she see...

(XXXI) In lines 2 and 3 the manuscript shows the cancelled reading —  
 Its fiery vigil in her native Mind  
 For joy escap'd she mourn'd.

In lines 7 and 8 there is the rejected reading—

Passions not to be subdued  
 Exalting her to patient Fortitude...

and again —

A yearning for her Love.

*ISABELLA.*

XXXIII.

Because Lorenzo came not. Oftentimes  
She ask'd her brothers, with an eye all pale,  
Striving to be itself, what dungeon climes  
Could keep him off so long? They spake a tale  
Time after time, to quiet her. Their crimes  
Came on them, like a smoke from Hinnom's vale;  
And every night in dreams they groan'd aloud,  
To see their sister in her snowy shroud.

XXXIV.

And she had died in drowsy ignorance,  
But for a thing more deadly dark than all;  
It came like a fierce potion, drunk by chance,  
Which saves a sick man from the feather'd pall  
For some few gasping moments; like a lance,  
Waking an Indian from his cloudy hall  
With cruel pierce, and bringing him again  
Sense of the gnawing fire at heart and brain.

XXXV.



ISABELLA.

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Lustre into the sun, and put cold doom  
Upon his lips, and taken the soft lute  
From his lorn voice, and past his loamed ears  
Had made a miry channel for his tears.

XXXVI.

Strange sound it was, when the pale shadow spake ;  
For there was striving, in its piteous tongue,  
To speak as when on earth it was awake,  
And Isabella on its music hung :  
Languor there was in it, and tremulous shake,  
As in a palsied Druid's harp unstrung ;  
And through it moan'd a ghostly under-song,  
Like hoarse night-gusts sepulchral briars among.

XXXVII.

Its eyes, though wild, were still all dewy bright  
With love, and kept all phantom fear aloof  
From the poor girl by magic of their light,  
The while it did unthread the horrid woof  
Of the late darken'd time, — the murderous spite  
Of pride and avarice, — the dark pine roof  
In the forest, — and the sodden turfed dell,  
Where, without any word, from stabs he fell.

XXXVIII.

Saying moreover, " Isabel, my sweet !  
" Red whortle-berries droop above my head,  
" And a large flint-stone weighs upon my feet ;  
" Around me beeches and high chestnuts shed  
" Their leaves and prickly nuts ; a sheep-fold bleat  
" Comes from beyond the river to my bed :

---

(XXXVI) In line 1 there is the cancelled reading *Strange was the sound* ; and *poor* for *pale* stands in the manuscript. Line 5 opens with *Passion there was in it*, and did open with *And there was Love in it*. Line 7 begins with *But* in the manuscript.

(XXXVII) The manuscript reads *fears* in line 2.

(XXXVIII) In line 6, instead of *river*, the manuscript reads *Ano* (for *Arno*) ; and the final couplet is —

Go shed a tear upon my hether bloom  
And I shall turn a diamond in my tomb.

No doubt *I* should be *it* ; but *I* is very plainly written.

*ISABELLA.*

“ Go, shed one tear upon my heather-bloom,  
“ And it shall comfort me within the tomb.

XXXIX.

“ I am a shadow now, alas ! alas !  
“ Upon the skirts of human-nature dwelling  
“ Alone : I chant alone the holy mass,  
“ While little sounds of life are round me knelling,  
“ And glossy bees at noon do fieldward pass,  
“ And many a chapel bell the hour is telling,  
“ Paining me through : those sounds grow strange to me,  
“ And thou art distant in Humanity.

XL.

“ I know what was, I feel full well what is,  
“ And I should rage, if spirits could go mad ;  
“ Though I forget the taste of earthly bliss,  
“ That paleness warms my grave, as though I had  
“ A Seraph chosen from the bright abyss  
“ To be my spouse : thy paleness makes me glad ;  
“ Thy beauty grows upon me, and I feel  
“ A greater love through all my essence steal.”

## XLII.

"Ha! ha!" said she, "I knew not this hard life,  
 "I thought the worst was simple misery;  
 "I thought some Fate with pleasure or with strife  
 "Portion'd us — happy days, or else to die;  
 "But there is crime — a brother's bloody knife!  
 "Sweet Spirit, thou hast school'd my infancy:  
 "I'll visit thee for this, and kiss thine eyes,  
 "And greet thee morn and even in the skies."

## XLIII.

When the full morning came, she had devised  
 How she might secret to the forest hie;  
 How she might find the clay, so dearly prized,  
 And sing to it one latest lullaby;  
 How her short absence might be unurmised,  
 While she the inmost of the dream would try.  
 Resolv'd, she took with her an aged nurse,  
 And went into that dismal forest-hearse.

## XLIV.

See, as they creep along the river side,  
 How she doth whisper to that aged Dame,  
 And, after looking round the champaign wide,  
 Shows her a knife. — "What feverous hectic flame  
 "Burns in thee, child? — What good can thee betide,  
 "That thou should'st smile again?" — The evening came,  
 And they had found Lorenzo's earthy bed;  
 The flint was there, the berries at his head.

## XLV.

Who hath not loiter'd in a green church-yard,  
 And let his spirit, like a demon-mole,  
 Work through the clayey soil and gravel hard,  
 To see scull, coffin'd bones, and funeral stole;  
 Pitying each form that hungry Death hath marr'd,  
 And filling it once more with human soul?  
 Ah! this is holiday to what was felt  
 When Isabella by Lorenzo knelt.

*ISABELLA.*

XLVI.

She gaz'd into the fresh-thrown mould, as though  
One glance did fully all its secrets tell ;  
Clearly she saw, as other eyes would know  
Pale limbs at bottom of a crystal well ;  
Upon the murderous spot she seem'd to grow,  
Like to a native lilly of the dell :  
Then with her knife, all sudden, she began  
To dig more fervently than misers can.

XLVII.

Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon  
Her silk had play'd in purple phantasies,  
She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than stone,  
And put it in her bosom, where it dries  
And freezes utterly unto the bone  
Those dainties made to still an infant's cries :  
Then 'gan she work again ; nor stay'd her care,  
But to throw back at times her veiling hair.



XLIX.

Ah ! wherefore all this wormy circumstance?  
Why linger at the yawning tomb so long?  
O for the gentleness of old Romance,  
The simple plaining of a minstrel's song !  
Fair reader, at the old tale take a glance,  
For here, in truth, it doth not well belong  
To speak : — O turn thee to the very tale,  
And taste the music of that vision pale.

L.

With duller steel than the Perséan sword  
They cut away no formless monster's head,  
But one, whose gentleness did well accord  
With death, as life. The ancient harps have said,  
Love never dies, but lives, immortal Lord :  
If Love impersonate was ever dead,  
Pale Isabella kiss'd it, and low moan'd.  
'Twas love ; cold, — dead indeed, but not dethron'd.

LI.

In anxious secrecy they took it home,  
And then the prize was all for Isabel :  
She calm'd its wild hair with a golden comb,  
And all around each eye's sepulchral cell  
Pointed each fringed lash ; the smeared loam  
With tears, as chilly as a dripping well,  
She drench'd away : — and still she comb'd, and kept  
Sighing all day — and still she kiss'd, and wept.

LII.

Then in a silken scarf, — sweet with the dews  
Of precious flowers pluck'd in Araby,  
And divine liquids come with odorous ooze  
Through the cold serpent-pipe refreshfully, —  
She wrapp'd it up ; and for its tomb did choose  
A garden-pot, wherein she laid it by,

---

(XLIX) "The very tale" will be found in the Appendix for such as wish to 'turn' to it.



*ISABELLA.*

And cover'd it with mould, and o'er it set  
Sweet Basil, which her tears kept ever wet.

LIII.

And she forgot the stars, the moon, and sun,  
And she forgot the blue above the trees,  
And she forgot the dells where waters run,  
And she forgot the chilly autumn breeze ;  
She had no knowledge when the day was done,  
And the new morn she saw not : but in peace  
Hung over her sweet Basil evermore,  
And moisten'd it with tears unto the core.

LIV.

And so she ever fed it with thin tears,  
Whence thick, and green, and beautiful it grew,  
So that it smelt more balmy than its peers  
Of Basil-tufts in Florence ; for it drew  
Nurture besides, and life, from human fears,  
From the fast mouldering head there shut from view :  
So that the jewel, safely casketed,  
Came forth, and in perfumed leafits spread.



*ISABELLA.*

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Through bronzed lyre in tragic order go,  
And touch the strings into a mystery ;  
Sound mournfully upon the winds and low ;  
For simple Isabel is soon to be  
Among the dead : She withers, like a palm  
Cut by an Indian for its juicy balm.

LVII.

O leave the palm to wither by itself ;  
Let not quick Winter chill its dying hour ! —  
It may not be — those Baälites of pelf,  
Her brethren, noted the continual shower  
From her dead eyes ; and many a curious elf,  
Among her kindred, wonder'd that such dower  
Of youth and beauty should be thrown aside  
By one mark'd out to be a Noble's bride.

LVIII.

And, furthermore, her brethren wonder'd much  
Why she sat drooping by the Basil green,  
And why it flourish'd, as by magic touch ;  
Greatly they wonder'd what the thing might mean :  
They could not surely give belief, that such  
A very nothing would have power to wean  
Her from her own fair youth, and pleasures gay,  
And even remembrance of her love's delay.

LIX.

Therefore they watch'd a time when they might sift  
This hidden whim ; and long they watch'd in vain :  
For seldom did she go to chapel-shrift,  
And seldom felt she any hunger-pain ;  
And when she left, she hurried back, as swift  
As bird on wing to breast its eggs again ;  
And, patient as a hen-bird, sat her there  
Beside her Basil, weeping through her hair.

LX.

Yet they contriv'd to steal the Basil-pot,  
And to examine it in secret place :  
The thing was vile with green and livid spot,  
And yet they knew it was Lorenzo's face :

*ISABELLA.*

The guerdon of their murder they had got,  
And so left Florence in a moment's space,  
Never to turn again. — Away they went,  
With blood upon their heads, to banishment.

LXI.

O Melancholy, turn thine eyes away!  
O Music, Music, breathe despondingly!  
O Echo, Echo, on some other day,  
From isles Lethæan, sigh to us — O sigh!  
Spirits of grief, sing not your "Well-a-way!"  
For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die;  
Will die a death too lone and incomplete,  
Now they have ta'en away her Basil sweet.

LXII.

Piteous she look'd on dead and senseless things,  
Asking for her lost Basil amorously;  
And with melodious chuckle in the strings  
Of her lorn voice, she oftentimes would cry  
After the Pilgrim in his wanderings,  
To ask him where her Basil was : and why



## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES.

[In a letter to George Keats and his wife dated the 14th of February [1819], Keats says that he took with him to Chichester, where he had been staying in January, "some of the thin paper, and wrote on it a little poem called 'St. Agnes' Eve,' which you will have as it is, when I have finished the blank part of the rest for you." Lord Houghton says the poem "was begun on a visit in Hampshire, at the commencement of this year [1819], and finished on his return to Hampstead." On the 5th of September 1819, Keats wrote to Taylor from Winchester that he was "occupied in revising 'St. Agnes' Eve,' and studying Italian." The manuscript of *The Eve of St. Agnes*, wanting the first seven stanzas, is in the possession of Mr. Frederick Locker. It was among the relics which passed from the late Joseph Severn to a Dr. Valeriani, and which were afterwards bought and sold by Messrs. Sotheran of Piccadilly. This manuscript is written in double columns on both sides of very thin oblong paper, presumably that taken to Chichester, and shows abundant and extensive revisions and corrections. Nothing could be more interesting as a study of a great poet's way of work. It is a calamity that the opening stanzas are missing: it seems likely that they were separated to send to the publishers in connexion with Keats's complaint that a liberty had been taken with the seventh stanza. See the note to that stanza. I have collated the text with the manuscript and noted even variations of no great consequence in themselves, in order to give as complete an insight as possible into the composition of this deservedly much-prized poem. Leigh Hunt in his *London Journal* for the 21st of January 1835, printed the whole poem with a delightful running commentary between the stanzas; and this I have transferred to the present edition in the shape of foot-notes, after collating it with the revision which has so prominent a place in *Imagination and Fancy*. I have not thought it necessary to omit whatever is left out of the revision; but have adopted the later readings wherever it is clear that a change was made for the simple sake of improvement. Hunt opens his paper in the *Journal* thus:

"The reader should give us three pearls, instead of three half-pence, for this number of our *Journal*, for it presents him with the

### THE EVE OF ST. AGNES.

of Mr. Keats's beautiful poem, entitled as above, — to say nothing of our loving commentary. We promised, some time ago, in giving quotations from Thomson's 'Castle of Indolence,' to read a small portion occasionally with the reader, after this fashion. Correspondents more than once reminded us of the promise: we never lost sight of it, and here we redeem it; as we hope we often shall. *To-day* is the Eve of St. Agnes; and we thought we could not take a better opportunity of increasing the public acquaintance with this exquisite poem, which is founded on the popular superstition connected with the day. St. Agnes was a Roman Virgin, who suffered martyrdom in the reign of Dioclesian. Her parents, a few days after her decease, are said to have had a vision of her, surrounded by angels, and attended by a white lamb, which afterwards became sacred to her. In the Catholic church formerly the nuns used to bring a couple of lambs to the altar during mass. The superstition is (for we believe it is still to be found) that by taking certain measures of divination, damsels may get a sight of their future husbands in a dream. The ordinary method seems to have been by fasting. Aubrey (as quoted in Brand's 'Popular Antiquities') mentions another, which is, to take a row of pins, and pull them out one by one, saying a Pater-noster; after which, upon going to bed, the dream is sure to ensue. Brand quotes Jonson: —

And on sweet St. Agnes' night,



## THE EVE OF ST. AGNES.

### I.

ST. Agnes' Eve — Ah, bitter chill it was!  
 The owl, for all his feathers, was a-cold;  
 The hare limp'd trembling through the frozen grass,  
 And silent was the flock in woolly fold:  
 Numb were the Beadsman's fingers, while he told  
 His rosary, and while his frosted breath,  
 Like pious incense from a censer old,  
 Seem'd taking flight for heaven, without a death,  
 Past the sweet Virgin's picture, while his prayer he saith.

(1) Hunt, quoting the first line as an illustration for the paper *A "Now;" descriptive of a Cold Day* in his *London Journal* for the 3rd of December 1834, changes the sex of the owl and reads —

"The owl, with all her feathers, is a-cold, or you think her so." In his comment on the whole stanza he again misquotes the line. He says, "What a complete feeling of winter-time is here, together with an intimation of those Catholic elegancies, of which we are to have more in the poem!"

The owl, with all his feathers, was a-cold.

Could he have selected an image more warm and comfortable in itself, and, therefore, better contradicted by the season? We feel the plump, feathery bird in his nook, shivering in spite of his natural household warmth, and staring out at the strange weather. The hare cringing through the chill grass is very piteous, and the 'silent flock' very patient; and how quiet and gentle, as well as wintery, are all these circumstances, and fit to open a quiet and gentle poem! The breath of the pilgrim, likened to 'pious incense,' completes them, and is a simile in admirable 'keeping,' as the painters call it; that is to say, is thoroughly harmonious with itself and all that is going on. The breath of the pilgrim is visible, so is that of a censer; his object is religious, and so is the use of the censer; the censer, after its fashion, may be said to pray, and its breath, like the pilgrim's, ascends to heaven. Young students of poetry may, in this image alone, see what imagination is, under one of its most poetical forms, and how thoroughly it 'tells.' There is no part of it unfitting. It is not applicable in one point, and the reverse in another."

In the letter which Keats wrote to Taylor about an alteration made in stanza vii (which see) he explains that he used the word *chill* "to avoid the echo cold in the second line;" from which we may infer that the publisher had altered *chill* to *cold*! We may safely assume that the obsolete form *a-cold* was imported straight from Shakespeare, since in Keats's copy of the 1808 folio Scene IV of Act III of *King Lear* bears evidence of having been read shortly after Tom Keats's death; and the words *poore Tom*, in the immediate neighbourhood of *Tom's a-cold*, are underlined, the date *Sunday evening, Oct. 4, 1818*, being written alongside by Keats.

*EVE OF ST. AGNES.*

II.

his prayer he saith, this patient, holy man;  
then takes his lamp, and riseth from his knees,  
and back returneth, meagre, barefoot, wan,  
along the chapel aisle by slow degrees:  
the sculptur'd dead, on each side, seem to freeze,  
imprison'd in black, purgatorial rails:  
nights, ladies, praying in dumb oratories,  
as he passeth by; and his weak spirit fails  
to think how they may ache in icy hoods and mails.

III.

Northward he turneth through a little door,  
and scarce three steps, ere Music's golden tongue

---

Hunt says "The germ of the thought, or something like it, is in Dante, where he speaks of the figures that perform the part of sustaining columns in architecture. Keats had read Dante in Mr. Carey's translation, for which he had a great respect. He began to read him afterwards in Italian, which language he was acquiring with surprising quickness. A friend of ours has a copy of Ariosto, containing admiring marks of his pen. But the same thought may have originally occurred to one poet as well as another. Perhaps there are few that have not felt something like it in seeing the figures upon tombs. Here, however, for the first time, I believe, in English poetry, it is expressed, and with what feeling and elegance! The wintry as well as penitential is the word 'aching' in 'icy hoods and mails:'

Flatter'd to tears this aged man and poor ;  
 But no — already had his deathbell rung ;  
 The joys of all his life were said and sung :  
 His was harsh penance on St. Agnes' Eve :  
 Another way he went, and soon among  
 Rough ashes sat he for his soul's reprieve,  
 And all night kept awake, for sinners' sake to grieve.

## IV.

That ancient Beadsman heard the prelude soft ;  
 And so it chanc'd, for many a door was wide,  
 From hurry to and fro. Soon, up aloft,  
 The silver, snarling trumpets 'gan to chide :  
 The level chambers, ready with their pride,  
 Were glowing to receive a thousand guests :  
 The carved angels, ever eager-ey'd,  
 Star'd, where upon their heads the cornice rests,  
 With hair blown back, and wings put cross-wise on their breasts.

## V.

At length burst in the argent revelry,  
 With plume, tiara, and all rich array,  
 Numerous as shadows haunting faerily  
 The brain, new stuff'd, in youth, with triumphs gay

---

in general than metaphysicians professed. He feels instinctively what the others get at by long searching. In this word 'flattered' is the whole theory of the secret of tears; which are the tributes, more or less worthy, of self-pity to self-love. Whenever we shed tears, we take pity on ourselves; and we feel, if we do not consciously say so, that we deserve to have the pity taken. In many cases, the pity is just, and the self-love not to be construed unhandsomely. In many others, it is the reverse; and this is the reason why selfish people are so often found among the tear-shedders, and why they seem never to shed them for others. They imagine themselves in the situation of the others, as indeed the most generous must, before they can sympathize; but the generous console as well as weep. Selfish tears are niggardly of everything but themselves. 'Flatter'd to tears.' Yes, the poor old man was moved, by the sweet music, to think that so sweet a thing was intended for his comfort as well as for others. He felt that the mysterious kindness of heaven did not omit even his poor, old, sorry case, in its numerous workings and visitations; and, as he wished to live longer, he began to think that his wish was to be attended to. He began to consider how much he had suffered — how much he had suffered wrongly and mysteriously — and how much better a man he was, with all his sins, than fate seemed to have taken him for. Hence, he found himself deserving of tears and self-pity, and he shed them, and felt soothed by his poor, old, loving self. Not undeservedly either; for he was a pains-taking pilgrim, aged, patient, and humble, and willingly suffered cold and toil, for the sake of something better than



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old romance. These let us wish away,  
And turn, soul-thoughted, to one Lady there,  
Whose heart had brooded, all that wintry day,  
On love, and wing'd St. Agnes' saintly care,  
Which she had heard old dames full many times declare.

VI.

They told her how, upon St. Agnes' Eve,  
Young virgins might have visions of delight,  
And soft adorings from their loves receive  
Upon the honey'd middle of the night,  
If ceremonies due they did aright;  
And, supperless to bed they must retire,  
And couch supine their beauties, lilly white;  
Nor look behind, nor sideways, but require  
Their heaven with upward eyes for all that they desire.

VII.

All of this whim was thoughtful Madeline:  
The music, yearning like a God in pain,  
She scarcely heard: her maiden eyes divine,  
As the first snow, saw many a swarming train

## VIII

She danc'd along with vague, regardless eyes,  
 Anxious her lips, her breathing quick and short:  
 The hallow'd hour was near at hand: she sighs  
 Amid the timbrels, and the throng'd resort  
 Of whisperers in anger, or in sport;  
 'Mid looks of love, defiance, hate, and scorn,  
 Hoodwink'd with faery fancy; all amort,  
 Save to St. Agnes and her lambs unshorn,  
 And all the bliss to be before to-morrow morn.

## IX.

So, purposing each moment to retire,  
 She linger'd still. Meantime, across the moors,  
 Had come young Porphyro, with heart on fire  
 For Madeline. Beside the portal doors,  
 Buttress'd from moonlight, stands he, and implores  
 All saints to give him sight of Madeline,  
 But for one moment in the tedious hours,

---

(VIII) The manuscript shows the following variation:

She danc'd along with vague uncager eyes  
 Her anxious mouth full pulp'd with rosy thought  
 The hour was near at hand — and she sighs...

but the reading of the text is substituted in the case of lines 2 and 3. In line 7 the reading *She was hoodwink'd with fancy* is superseded by that of the text. The use of the old word *amort* is peculiarly happy: it is more expressive of deadened perception than any other single word, and is full of poetic associations. Compare *The Taming of the Shrew*, Act IV, Scene III, line 36 —

How fares my Kate? What, sweeting, all amort?

also the First Part of *King Henry VI*, Act III, Scene II, line 124 —

What, all amort? Rouen hangs her head for grief...

and Massinger's *Parliament of Love*, Act IV, Scene V, —

Jovial! doctor;

No, I am all amort as if I had lain

Three days in my grave already.

(IX) Cancelled manuscript reading, *She lingered fearful who might*. In line 3 *Porphyro* is cancelled and *Lionel* substituted, and we read *afire* for *on fire*. After *Madeline* in line 4 there is a cancelled reading —

Most piteous he implores

All saints,

and before the reading of the text was arrived at there was a midway reading *Within the Portal Doors*. Line 8 originally stood, unfinished,

'That he might gaze, — or speak, or kneel —

presumably completed in the poet's mind by the words *such things have been*.

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that he might gaze and worship all unseen ;  
hance speak, kneel, touch, kiss — in sooth such things have been.

X.

ventures in : let no buzz'd whisper tell :  
l eyes be muffled, or a hundred swords  
ill storm his heart, Love's fev'rous citadel :  
r him, those chambers held barbarian hordes,  
ena foemen, and hot-blooded lords,  
hose very dogs would execrations howl  
gainst his lineage : not one breast affords  
m any mercy, in that mansion foul,  
one old beldame, weak in body and in soul

XI.

, happy chance ! the aged creature came,  
uffling along with ivory-headed wand,  
where he stood, hid from the torch's flame,  
hind a broad hall-pillar, far beyond  
e sound of merriment and chorus bland :  
startled here : but soon she knew his face

## XII.

"Get hence! get hence! there's dwarfish Hildebrand;  
 "He had a fever late, and in the fit  
 "He cursed thee and thine, both house and land:  
 "Then there's that old Lord Maurice, not a whit  
 "More tame for his gray hairs — Alas me! flit!  
 "Flit like a ghost away." — "Ah, Gossip dear,  
 "We're safe enough; here in this arm-chair sit,  
 "And tell me how" — "Good Saints! not here, not here;  
 "Follow me, child, or else these stones will be thy bier."

## XIII.

He follow'd through a lowly arched way,  
 Brushing the cobwebs with his lofty plume,  
 And as she mutter'd "Well-a — well-a-day!"  
 He found him in a little moonlight room,  
 Pale, lattic'd, chill, and silent as a tomb.  
 "Now tell me where is Madeline," said he,  
 "O tell me, Angela, by the holy loom  
 "Which none but secret sisterhood may see,  
 "When they St. Agnes' wool are weaving piously."

(XII) Cancelled manuscript reading, *Ferdinand* for *Hildebrand*, and in line 2 *his fit*. Line 4 originally stood —

There's old Francesco Mendez not a wit [sic]  
 Tamer for all his Palsy...

Another reading is

Then there's old Lord Maurice Lacey not a wit  
 More tame for his gray hairs...

In line 8 *Good God!* stands cancelled in favour of *Good Saints!* — and line 9 originally began *Follow me Child — hush, hush*.

(XIII) In the manuscript, the line

He followed her along a passage dark

is cancelled, and the reading of the text given. Line 5 originally began *Pale case-mented*, for which *Pale latticed high* was substituted; but *chill* is not in the manuscript, which, in line 7, reads *Goody* for *Angela*, and in line 8 *holy* for *secret*. In line 9, *do weave full piously* is cancelled for *are weaving piously*. Hunt comments thus: "The poet does not make his 'little moonlight room' comfortable, observe. The high taste of the exordium is kept up. All is still wintry. There is to be no comfort in the poem but what is given by love. All else may be left to the cold walls."

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XIV.

St. Agnes! Ah! it is St. Agnes' Eve —  
Yet men will murder upon holy days:  
Thou must hold water in a witch's sieve,  
And be liege-lord of all the Elves and Fays,  
To venture so: it fills me with amaze  
To see thee, Porphyro! — St. Agnes' Eve!  
God's help! my lady fair the conjuror plays  
This very night: good angels her deceive!  
Let me laugh awhile, I've mickle time to grieve."

XV.

ably she laugheth in the languid moon,  
While Porphyro upon her face doth look,  
The puzzled urchin on an aged crone  
Who keepeth clos'd a wond'rous riddle-book,  
Spectacled she sits in chimney nook.  
But soon his eyes grew brilliant, when she told  
His lady's purpose; and he scarce could brook  
The news, at the thought of those enchantments cold,  
That led him to his loss of beauty and of gold.

## XVI.

Sudden a thought came like a full-blown rose,  
 Flushing his brow, and in his pained heart  
 Made purple riot : then doth he propose  
 A stratagem, that makes the beldame start :  
 " A cruel man and impious thou art :  
 " Sweet lady, let her pray, and sleep, and dream  
 " Alone with her good angels, far apart  
 " From wicked men like thee. Go, go ! — I deem  
 " Thou canst not surely be the same that thou didst seem."

## XVII.

" I will not harm her, by all saints I swear,"  
 Quoth Porphyro : " O may I ne'er find grace

---

*Madeline asleep in her bed.* It is curious that the critic takes no notice of the strange misuse of *brook* for the sake of rhyme. Perhaps the sentiment of the word *bault* was in Keats's mind, as that is clearly the meaning of the passage; and *brook* was probably written in a kind of absence of mind.

(XVI) The opening originally stood thus in the manuscript :

Sudden a thought more rosy than the rose  
 Flush'd his young Check, and in his painfle head  
 Made riot fierce — and then doth he propose...

The revision of this passage leaves it incomplete, thus —

Sudden a rosy thought  
 Heated his Brow and in his painfle head  
 Made purple riot : then doth he propose...

The reading of the text is not supplied at all. The phonetic spelling *painfle* for *painful* is curious; and the word *head* where *heart* now stands, though it has no rhyme in the manuscript, is perfectly legible. At the close of the stanza the manuscript reads first —

by Christ I deem  
 Thou canst not be the Youth...

and then

O Christ I deem  
 Thou canst not surely be the same as thou didst seem —

as being finally altered to *that*. There are no turned commas at the end of the stanza in Keats's edition.

(XVII) In the manuscript, lines 1 to 4 read —

' I will not harm her, by the great St. Paul ;  
 Swear'th Porphyro, — O may I ne'er find grace  
 When my weak voice shall unto heaven call  
 If one of her soft ringlets I misplace...

In line 2 *Swear'th* has been substituted for *Says*. The sixth line originally stood thus —

Good Angela, thou hearest how I swear —

but this is cancelled for the reading of the text.

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When my weak voice shall whisper its last prayer,  
If one of her soft ringlets I displace,  
Or look with ruffian passion in her face:  
Good Angela, believe me by these tears;  
Or I will, even in a moment's space,  
Awake, with horrid shout, my foemen's ears,  
And beard them, though they be more fang'd than wolves and bears."

XVIII.

Ah! why wilt thou affright a feeble soul?  
A poor, weak, palsy-stricken, churchyard thing,  
Whose passing-bell may ere the midnight toll;  
Whose prayers for thee, each morn and evening,  
Were never miss'd." — Thus plaining, doth she bring  
Gentler speech from burning Porphyro;  
Woful, and of such deep sorrowing,  
That Angela gives promise she will do  
Whatever he shall wish, betide her weal or woe.

XIX.

Which was, to lead him, in close secrecy,

Him in a closet, of such privacy  
 That he might see her beauty unesp'y'd,  
 And win perhaps that night a peerless bride,  
 While legion'd faeries pac'd the coverlet,  
 And pale enchantment held her sleepy-ey'd.  
 Never on such a night have lovers met,  
 Since Merlin paid his Demon all the monstrous debt.

## XX.

"It shall be as thou wishest," said the dame:  
 "All cates and dainties shall be stored there  
 "Quickly on this feast-night: by the tambour frame  
 "Her own lute thou wilt see: no time to spare,  
 "For I am slow and feeble, and scarce dare  
 "On such a catering trust my dizzy head.  
 "Wait here, my child, with patience: kneel in prayer  
 "The while: Ah! thou must needs the lady wed,  
 "Or may I never leave my grave among the dead."

## XXI.

So saying, she hobbled off with busy fear.  
 The lover's endless minutes slowly pass'd;

---

was the work of which this fine line was a reminiscence; for the alternative readings *the demons* and *his Demon* point to the two opening sentences of the section on Merlin, namely (I quote the second edition, of 1816, Volume I, page 203): "The demons, alarmed at the number of victims which daily escaped their fangs since the birth of our Saviour, held a council of war. It was there resolved that one of their number should be sent to the world with instructions to engender on some virgin a child, who might act as their vicegerent on earth, and thus counteract the great plan that had been laid for the salvation of mankind." As to the words "never on such a night," &c., it is presumable that they refer to the tempest which, according to tradition, passed over the woods of Broceliande the night after the magician was spell-bound.

(XX) In line 5 *And* is cancelled in the manuscript in favour of *For*. Of line 7 there are two manuscript readings —

and But wait an hour's time — and kneel in prayer

But wait an hour's passing — kneel in prayer,  
 but the reading of the text does not appear.

(XXI) Cancelled reading of the manuscript —

So saying she hobbled out busily  
 And we will pass the Lover's endless hour;

The second line is rewritten thus:

The Lover's endless minutes, quickly pass'd;

*slowly* does not appear in the manuscript, which, in line 3, reads *whispers*. In line 5



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The dame return'd, and whisper'd in his ear  
To follow her; with aged eyes aghast  
From fright of dim espial. Safe at last,  
Through many a dusky gallery, they gain  
The maiden's chamber, silken, hush'd, and chaste;  
Where Porphyro took covert, pleas'd amain.  
The poor guide hurried back with agues in her brain.

XXII.

Her falt'ring hand upon the balustrade,  
And Angela was feeling for the stair,  
When Madeline, St. Agnes' charmed maid,  
Rose, like a mission'd spirit, unaware:  
With silver taper's light, and pious care,

---

*espial* is substituted for what seems to have been *airy vision*. Line 6 stood  
ally —

Through loneliest passages and they gain'd,  
and *reach*, each being substituted in turn for *gain'd*, and the line being at  
left so as to read

Through lonely oaken Galleries they reach...  
first stood —

There in a panting covert to remain



She turn'd, and down the aged gossip led  
To a safe level matting. Now prepare,  
Young Porphyro, for gazing on that bed;  
She comes, she comes again, like ring-dove fray'd and fled.

## XXIII.

Out went the taper as she hurried in;  
Its little smoke, in pallid moonshine, died:  
She clos'd the door, she panted, all akin  
To spirits of the air, and visions wide:  
No uttered syllable, or, woe betide!  
But to her heart, her heart was voluble,  
Paining with eloquence her balmy side;  
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell  
Her throat in vain, and die, heart-stifled, in her dell.

## XXIV.

A casement high and triple-arch'd there was,  
All garlanded with carven imag'ries

---

(XXIII) The manuscript shows no variation in this wonderful stanza till we come to the Alexandrine, originally, I think, written as a line of ballad metre:

Her barren throat in vain and die heart-stifled in her dell:

*barren* and *in vain* have both been cancelled, but *in vain* has been reinserted. Hunt says of the second line, "This is a verse in the taste of Chaucer, full of minute grace and truth. The smoke of the wax taper seems almost as ethereal and fair as the moonlight, and both suit each other and the heroine. But what a lovely line is the seventh, about the heart,

Paining with eloquence her balmy side

And the nightingale! how touching the simile! the heart a 'tongueless nightingale,' dying in the bed of the bosom. What thorough sweetness, and perfection of lovely imagery! How one delicacy is heaped upon another! But for a burst of richness, noiseless, coloured, suddenly enriching the moonlight, as if a door of heaven were opened, read the stanza that follows."

(XXIV) This sumptuous passage occupied the poet's care very considerably. The following opening stands cancelled in the manuscript:

A Casement tripple arch'd and diamonded  
With many coloured glass fronted the Moon  
In midst w[h]ereof a shi[e]lded scutcheon shed  
High blushing gules; she kneeled saintly down  
And inly prayed for grace and heavenly boon;  
The blood red gules fell on her silver cross  
And her white hands devout.

In line 3 of this, *of which* stands cancelled in favour of *wereof*; and line 4 originally began with *High blushing gules upon*. A second fresh start is—

There was a Casement tripple arch'd and high

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fruits, and flowers, and bunches of knot-grass,  
and diamonded with panes of quaint device,  
numerable of stains and splendid dyes,  
are the tiger-moth's deep-damask'd wings;  
and in the midst, 'mong thousand heraldries,  
and twilight saints, and dim emblazonings,  
a faded scutcheon blush'd with blood of queens and kings.

XXV.

On this casement shone the wintry moon,  
and threw warm gules on Madeline's fair breast,  
down she knelt for heaven's grace and boon;

---

All garlanded with carven imageries  
Of fruits and trailing flowers and sunny corn :  
this was rejected the third line was amended thus —  
Of fruits and flowers and sunny corn ears parch'd :  
Some Keats noticed that *corn* did not rhyme with *high*, and meant to transpose  
the last line thus —  
There was a casement high and triple arch'd ;  
There is no trace of this in the manuscript. In the stanza as finally written  
is the following cancelled reading of lines 6 &c. —  
As is the wing of evening tiger moths

Rose-bloom fell on her hands, together prest,  
 And on her silver cross soft amethyst,  
 And on her hair a glory, like a saint :  
 She seem'd a splendid angel, newly drest,  
 Save wings, for heaven : — Porphyro grew faint :  
 She knelt, so pure a thing, so free from mortal taint.

## XXVI.

Anon his heart revives : her vespers done,  
 Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she frees ;

the gorgeous painted window, completes the exceeding and unique beauty of this picture, — one that will for ever stand by itself in poetry, as an addition to the stock. It would have struck a glow on the face of Shakspeare himself. He might have put Imogen or Ophelia under such a shrine. How proper, as well as pretty, the heraldic term *gules*, considering the occasion. *Red* would not have been a fiftieth part so good. And with what elegant luxury he touches the 'silver cross' with 'amethyst,' and the fair human hands with 'rose colours,' the kin of their carnation ! 'The lover's growing faint' is one of the few inequalities which are to be found in the later productions of this great, but young and over-sensitive poet. He had, at the time of his writing this poem, the seeds of a mortal illness in him, and he, doubtless, wrote as he had felt — for he was also deeply in love ; and extreme sensibility struggled in him with a great understanding." The faintness was not such a matter of accident as Hunt seems to have supposed : see remarks in the Preface. The colouring of the stanza has been frequently criticized on the ground that the moon's light is not really strong enough to transfer to an object the colours of a painted window. The good unscientific Hunt was wiser in his generation than to note this as a flaw ; perhaps he even felt the higher truth that there was a rich propriety in the miracle. Without venturing to affirm that Keats knew it was a miracle, I am bold to say that, whether he knew it or not, he could not have found a more splendid expedient whereby to mark the propitiousness of meek St. Agnes.

(XXVI) The first opening of this stanza in the manuscript is —

But soon his heart revives — her prayers said  
 She lays aside her veil  
 She strips her hair of all its wreathed pearl  
 Uncasps her bosom jewels  
 And twists it in one knot upon her head...

Before this was struck out altogether, *wreathed pearl* was altered to *pearled wreaths*.  
 The next essay is —

But soon his heart revives — her praying done  
 Of all its wreathed pearl she strips her hair  
 Uncasps her warmed jewels one by one  
 Loosens the boddice from her...

and this last line is altered several times, thus —

Loosens her bursting boddice...  
 Loosens her Boddice lace-strings...  
 Loosens her Boddice, and her bosom bare...  
 Loosens her fragrant boddice and doth bare  
 Her...

till at last all is struck out and a fresh start made, thus —

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clasps her warmed jewels one by one ;  
loosens her fragrant boddice ; by degrees  
her rich attire creeps rustling to her knees :  
half-hidden, like a mermaid in sea-weed,  
involuntarily she dreams awake, and sees,  
in fancy, fair St. Agnes in her bed,  
who dares not look behind, or all the charm is fled.

XXVII.

anon, trembling in her soft and chilly nest,  
in a sort of wakeful swoon, perplex'd she lay,

---

But soon his heart revives — her praying done  
Of all its wreathed pearls her hair she strips  
Unclasps her warmed jewels one by one  
Loosens her fragrant boddice ; and down slips  
Her sweet attire...

*Anon* seems to have been substituted for *But soon* in line 1, *freed* for *strips* in  
line 2, and the words *and down slips* in line 4 were struck out for the reading —

to her knees  
Her sweet attire falls light,

*falls light* gives place to *creeps down by*, which probably indicates that the  
reading contemplated was —

Unclasps her fragrant boddice : to her knees



Until the poppi'd warmth of sleep oppress'd  
Her soothed limbs, and soul fatigued away ;  
Flown, like a thought, until the morrow-day ;  
Blissfully haven'd both from joy and pain ;  
Clasp'd like a missal where swart Paynims pray ;  
Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,  
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.

## XXVIII.

Stol'n to this paradise, and so entranced,  
Porphyro gaz'd upon her empty dress,  
And listen'd to her breathing, if it chanced  
To wake into a slumberous tenderness ;  
Which when he heard, that minute did he bless,  
And breath'd himself: then from the closet crept,  
Noiseless as fear in a wide wilderness,  
And over the hush'd carpet, silent, stept,  
And 'tween the curtains peep'd, where, lo! — how fast she slept.

---

"Can the beautiful go beyond this? I never saw it. And how the imagery rises! Flown like a *thought* — Blissfully *haven'd* — Clasp'd like a missal in a land of *Pagans*; that is to say, where Christian prayer books must not be seen, and are, therefore, doubly cherished for the danger. And then, although nothing can surpass the preciousness of this idea, is the idea of the beautiful, crowning all —

*Blinded alike from sunshine and from rain,  
As though a rose should shut, and be a bud again.*

Thus it is that poetry, in its intense sympathy with creation, may be said to create anew, rendering its words more impressive than the objects they speak of, and individually more lasting; the spiritual perpetuity putting them on a level (not to speak it profanely) with the fugitive compound."

(XXVIII) The manuscript has the following cancelled passages before the stanza starts fairly:

Her slumbrous breathing...  
The listening Porphyro her breathing heard  
And when...  
The entranced Porphyro stol'n to Paradise.

Line 5 originally stood unfinished —

Which when he heard he breath'd himself...

Of line 7 another version is —

Noiseless as Fear amid a wilderness,

and line 8 seems to have been meant to read —

And o'er the silent carpet hushing stept,

before the reading of the text was given. In line 9 the manuscript reads *and for where*.

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XXIX.

en by the bed-side, where the faded moon  
de a dim, silver twilight, soft he set  
table, and, half anguish'd, threw thereon  
cloth of woven crimson, gold, and jet: —  
for some drowsy Morphean amulet!  
e boisterous, midnight, festive clarion,  
e kettle-drum, and far-heard clarionet,  
ray his ears, though but in dying tone: —  
hall door shuts again, and all the noise is gone.

XXX.

d still she slept an azure-lidded sleep,  
blanched linen, smooth, and lavender'd,

---

(X) In the manuscript, the first three lines read thus:

Then by the bed side where the fading Moon

Made an illumed twilight soft he set

A Table, and with anguish spread thereon...

There is a cancelled reading of line 3 —

A Table light, and stilly threw thereon...

While he from forth the closet brought a heap  
 Of candied apple, quince, and plum, and gourd;  
 With jellies soother than the creamy curd,  
 And lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon;  
 Manna and dates, in argosy transferr'd  
 From Fez; and spiced dainties, every one,  
 From silken Samarcand to cedar'd Lebanon.

## XXXI.

These delicats he heap'd with glowing hand  
 On golden dishes and in baskets bright  
 Of wreathed silver: sumptuous they stand  
 In the retired quiet of the night,  
 Filling the chilly room with perfume light. —

---

revision. Porphyro's banquet is a little suggestive of the "second course" in the meal prepared for Jupiter and Mercury by Baucis and Philemon (Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book VIII, verses 677-80, Sandys's Translation):

Philberts, dry figs, with rugged dates, ripe plummets,  
 Sweet-smelling apples, disht in osier twines;  
 And purple grapes new gather'd from their vines:  
 I' th' midst, a honny combe.

But Keats's stanza is still more suggestive of the vegetarian banquet prepared by Eve for the Archangel Raphael (*Paradise Lost*, Book V, lines 337-48):

Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother yields,  
 In India East or West, or middle shore  
 In Pontus or the Punic coast, or where  
 Alcinoüs reigned, fruit of all kinds, in coat  
 Rough or smooth rined, or bearded husk, or shell,  
 She gathers, tribute large, and on the board  
 Heaps with unsparing hand. For drink the grape  
 She crushes, inoffensive must, and meaths  
 From many a berry, and from sweet kernels pressed  
 She tempers dulcet creams — nor these to hold  
 Wants her fit vessels pure; then strews the ground  
 With rose and odours from the shrub unfum'd.

It is further worth while to note the resemblance of the highly elaborate syrup line to a passage in Milton's *Comus*, lines 672-4:

And first behold this cordial julep here,  
 That flames, and dances in his crystal bounds,  
 With spirits of balm, and fragrant syrups mix'd.

We have here even the same prevalent assonance on the vowel sound *i*. Leigh Hunt says in his dainty way, "Here is delicate modulation, and super-refined epicurean nicety!"

Lucent syrups, tinct with cinnamon,  
 make us read the line delicately, and at the tip-end, as it were, of one's tongue."  
 (XXXI) The manuscript reads *golden salvers* in line 2; but I presume *dishes* was inserted in the proof to avoid using *salvers* twice, and he would scarcely



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And now, my love, my seraph fair, awake!  
Thou art my heaven, and I thine eremite:  
Open thine eyes, for meek St. Agnes' sake,  
I shall drowse beside thee, so my soul doth ache."

XXXII.

Thus whispering, his warm, unnerved arm  
Laid in her pillow. Shaded was her dream  
By the dusk curtains: — 'twas a midnight charm  
Impossible to melt as iced stream:  
The lustrous salvers in the moonlight gleam;  
A broad golden fringe upon the carpet lies:  
He seem'd he never, never could redeem  
From such a stedfast spell his lady's eyes;  
He drows'd awhile, entoil'd in woofed phantasies.

XXXIII.

Awakening up, he took her hollow lute, —  
And, in chords that tenderest be,

---

to the *lustrous salvers* of the next stanza. Lines 4 &c. in the manuscript were



He play'd an ancient ditty, long since mute,  
In Provence call'd, "La belle dame sans mercy:"  
Close to her ear touching the melody; —  
Wherewith disturb'd, she utter'd a soft moan.  
He ceas'd — she panted quick — and suddenly  
Her blue affrayed eyes wide open shone:  
Upon his knees he sank, pale as smooth-sculptured stone

## XXXIV.

Her eyes were open, but she still beheld,  
Now wide awake, the vision of her sleep:  
There was a painful change, that nigh expell'd  
The blisses of her dream so pure and deep  
At which fair Madeline began to weep,  
And moan forth witless words with many a sigh;  
While still her gaze on Porphyro would keep;  
Who knelt, with joined hands and piteous eye,  
Fearing to move or speak, she look'd so dreamingly.

## XXXV.

"Ah, Porphyro!" said she, "but even now  
'Thy voice was at sweet tremble in mine ear,  
'Made tuneable with every sweetest vow;  
'And those sad eyes were spiritual and clear:

---

(xxxiv) Line 2 was originally written —

The vision of her sleep, now wide awake:

the transposition is marked in the manuscript, where, in line 3, *some painful change* stands altered to *a painful change*. Line 5 originally began with *At which she*, and in line 6 the manuscript reads *little words*, though *witless* is written by way of memorandum in the margin. Lines 8 and 9 read —

Who with an aching brow and piteous eye

Feared to move or speak she looked so dreamingly.

(xxxv) There are two half cancelled openings,

At length she speaks, 'Ah Porphyro here

and

Ah Porphyro, saith she but even now...

and no complete line is supplied in the manuscript. In line 2 *by* is cancelled in favour of *in*; and the manuscript reads *by* for *with* in line 3, *thy kind eyes* for *those sad eyes* in line 4, and *a[r]t thou* for *thou art* in line 5. Compare the first quatrain with *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* (Act I, Scene 1, lines 183-4) —

Your eyes are lode-stars; and your tongue's sweet air  
More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,...

*EVE OF ST. AGNES.*

How chang'd thou art! how pallid, chill, and drear!  
Give me that voice again, my Porphyro,  
Those looks immortal, those complainings dear!  
Oh leave me not in this eternal woe,  
Or if thou diest, my Love, I know not where to go."

XXXVI.

beyond a mortal man impassion'd far  
At these voluptuous accents, he arose,  
Ethereal, flush'd, and like a throbbing star  
When mid the sapphire heaven's deep repose;  
To her dream he melted, as the rose  
Yieldeth its odour with the violet, —  
A vision sweet: meantime the frost-wind blows  
Like Love's alarum pattering the sharp sleet  
Against the window-panes; St. Agnes' moon hath set.

XXXVII.

It is dark: quick pattereth the flaw-blown sleet:  
This is no dream, my bride, my Madeline!"  
It is dark: the iced gusts still rave and beat:

- " Porphyro will leave me here to fade and pine. —  
 " Cruel ! what traitor could thee hither bring ?  
 " I curse not, for my heart is lost in thine,  
 " Though thou forsakest a deceived thing ; —  
 " A dove forlorn and lost with sick unpruned wing."

## XXXVIII.

- " My Madeline ! sweet dreamer ! lovely bride !  
 " Say, may I be for aye thy vassal blest ?  
 " Thy beauty's shield, heart-shap'd and vermeil dy'd ?  
 " Ah, silver shrine, here will I take my rest  
 " After so many hours of toil and quest,  
 " A famish'd pilgrim, — sav'd by miracle.  
 " Though I have found, I will not rob thy nest  
 " Saving of thy sweet self ; if thou think'st well  
 " To trust, fair Madeline, to no rude infidel.

## XXXIX.

- " Hark ! 'tis an elfin-storm from faery land,  
 " Of haggard seeming, but a boon indeed :

- 
- (XXXVIII) There is a rejected reading of line 1 in the manuscript —  
     My Madeline ! Dark is this wintry night —  
 and of line 4     Ah silver shrine by thee will I take rest.  
 Line 6 originally began with the words *With tearful*; and there are two completed  
 versions —     With features pale and mournful Pilgrim's weeds  
 and             Pale featured and in weeds of Pilgrimage —  
 which stands uncanceled. Line 7 was first written thus :  
     I have found, but will not rob thy downy nest !  
 then             Though I have found I cannot rob thy nest !  
 and finally the last three lines are left standing thus :  
     Though I have found but cannot rob thy nest !  
     Soft Nightingale, I'll keep thee in a cage  
     To sing to me — but hark ! the blinded tempest's rage !

The inverted commas are closed at the end of the stanza in Keats's edition. Hunt says, " With what a pretty wilful conceit the *costume* of the poem is kept up in the third line about the shield ! The poet knew when to introduce apparent trifles forbidden to those who are void of real passion, and who, feeling nothing intensely, can intensify nothing."

(XXXIX) Line 2 originally ended with *but, my love, to us*, which was altered first to *but a boon in truth* and then to *but a boon indeed*. Line 3 has a cancelled reading,

EVE OF ST. AGNES.

Arise — arise! the morning is at hand; —  
The bloated wassaillers will never heed: —  
Let us away, my love, with happy speed;  
There are no ears to hear, or eyes to see, —  
Drown'd all in Rhenish and the sleepy mead:  
Awake! arise! my love, and fearless be,  
For o'er the southern moors I have a home for thee."

XL.

He hurried at his words, beset with fear,  
For there were sleeping dragons all around,

---

*my Love.* For line 6 there is a false start, *Over the moors.* Line 7 originally  
with *the drench of mead*, altered to *the drenching mead* before the happier  
of the text was supplied. The last two lines stand thus in the manuscript —

Put on warm cloathing, sweet, and fearless be  
Over the dartmoor bl[e]ak I have a home for thee.

is a cancelled reading, *Over the bleak Dartmoor*; but for which one might  
we felt perfectly certain that *dartmoor blaek* (with a small *d*) was an allusion  
to the moor wherein the river Dart takes its rise, and which Keats could see from  
his window in looking up the Estuary of the Teign.

) In line 2, *about* stands cancelled for *around* in the manuscript; and line 3  
was first written thus:

Or perhaps at glaring watch with ready spears —



At glaring watch, perhaps, with ready spears —  
 Down the wide stairs a darkling way they found. —  
 In all the house was heard no human sound.  
 A chain-droop'd lamp was flickering by each door;  
 The arras, rich with horseman, hawk, and hound,  
 Flutter'd in the besieging wind's uproar;  
 And the long carpets rose along the gusty floor.

XLI.

They glide, like phantoms, into the wide hall;  
 Like phantoms, to the iron porch, they glide;  
 Where lay the Porter, in uneasy sprawl,  
 With a huge empty flaggon by his side:  
 The wakeful bloodhound rose, and shook his hide,  
 But his sagacious eye an inmate owns:  
 By one, and one, the bolts full easy slide: —  
 The chains lie silent on the footworn stones; —  
 The key turns, and the door upon its hinges groans.

XLII.

And they are gone: aye, ages long ago  
 These lovers fled away into the storm.

(XLI) Lines 1 and 2 were first written thus:

Like Spirits into the wide-paven hall  
 They glide,—and to the iron porch in haste;

but the reading of the text is supplied in the manuscript. In line 3, *slept* is substituted for *lay*, and *lay* again for *slept*. The manuscript reads *beaker* for *flaggon*. For line 6 was originally written—

And paced round Madeline all angerless,

and next

But with a calmed eye his mistress owns,

and then the reading of the text except that *unanger'd* has the place of *sagacious*, which does not appear in the manuscript at all. Of line 7 there is a rejected opening, *The chains are loos'd, the...* and again a rejected close—

the easy bolts back slide

Silent.

Line 8 was originally—

Upon the pavement lie the heavy chains;

and in the line of the text as written *lay* stands for *lie*.

(XLII) Lines 1 to 6 were at first written thus:

And they are gone—Aye, ages long ago  
 These lovers fled into a night of storms—  
 That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe

EVE OF ST. AGNES.

That night the Baron dreamt of many a woe,  
And all his warrior-guests, with shade and form  
Of witch, and demon, and large coffin-worm,  
Were long be-nightmar'd. Angela the old  
Was palsy-twitch'd, with meagre face deform;  
The Beadsman, after thousand aves told,  
Aye unsought for slept among his ashes cold.

---

And all his warrior Guests with shades and forms  
Of Witches, Deamons, and large coffin worms  
Were long benign[t]mared. Angela ne'er told...

This stanza is left unfinished, as a *night of* is struck out and *the storm* (?) inserted but the second word cancelled. In line 3 *night* is struck out in favour of *Morn*; but *Morn* was rejected and *night* restored, doubtless, when in revising the proof *night* was removed from line 2. In line 5 *charnal* stands cancelled for *coffin*. In line 6 *was* is cancelled and *all* left standing in its place; and for the rest the manuscript seems to correspond with the stanza as given in the text. Hunt's last word is *advers*; here endeth the young and divine Poet, but not the delight and gratitude of his readers; for, as he sings elsewhere—

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."



## POEMS.

[Published with *Lamia &c.*, 1820.]

### ODE TO A NIGHTINGALE.

#### I.

MY heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains  
My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,  
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains  
One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:  
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,  
But being too happy in thine happiness, —  
That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,  
In some melodious plot

---

Haydon, in one of his letters to Miss Mitford (*Correspondence &c.*, Volume II, page 72), says of Keats — "The death of his brother wounded him deeply, and it appeared to me from that hour he began to droop. He wrote his exquisite 'Ode to the Nightingale' at this time, and as we were one evening walking in the Kilburn meadows he repeated it to me, before he put it to paper, in a low, tremulous undertone which affected me extremely." Lord Houghton says the Ode was suggested by the continued song of a nightingale which, in the spring of 1819, had built its nest close to Wentworth Place. "Keats," says his Lordship (Aldine edition, 1876, page 237), "took great pleasure in her song, and one morning took his chair from the breakfast-table to the grass plot under a plum tree, where he remained between two and three hours. He then reached the house with some scraps of paper in his hand, which he soon put together in the form of this Ode." The anecdote as told in the *Life, Letters, &c.* (Volume I, page 245 of the 1848 edition, and page 207 of the 1867 edition) represents Brown as detecting the poet in the act of thrusting the scraps of the Ode away "as waste paper, behind some books," and names Brown as the person who put them together. I presume Lord Houghton saw afterwards that Brown must have mistaken the bearing of Keats's action, inasmuch as the other evidence does not square with the carelessness implied. It is well to put the two forms of the story together, because the earlier version is a favourite cutting for magazine and anthology notes. The fair copy of the Ode written at the end of the *Endymion* in Sir Charles Dilke's collection is dated "May 1819." The poem was printed as long ago as July 1819, in a quarterly magazine called *Annals of the Fine Arts*, which was edited by James Elmes, but to a great extent informed by Haydon. The ode is the last thing in Number XIII, and is signed with a "dagger" (†). The original version corresponds in the main with Sir Charles Dilke's manuscript; and both are headed *Ode to the Nightingale*, not a *Nightingale*.

(1) Lord Houghton and Mr. Palgrave follow the editions of Galligani and Smith in printing *thy* for *thine* in the sixth line of this stanza; but I am not aware of any authority for the change.



*POEMS PUBLISHED WITH LAMIA, ETC., 1820.*

Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,  
Singing of summer in full-throated ease.

2.

O, for a draught of vintage ! that hath been  
Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,  
Tasting of Flora and the country green,  
Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth !  
O for a beaker full of the warm South,  
Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,  
With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,  
And purple-stained mouth ;  
That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,  
And with thee fade away into the forest dim :

3.

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
What thou among the leaves hast never known,  
The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;

---

Of Keats's partiality for claret, enough and too much has been made; but

Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,  
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;  
     Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
     And leaden-ey'd despairs,  
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,  
     Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

## 4.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,  
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,  
 But on the viewless wings of Poesy,  
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:  
 Already with thee! tender is the night,  
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,  
     Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;  
     But here there is no light,  
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown  
     Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

## 5.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,  
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,  
 But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet  
     Wherewith the seasonable month endows  
 The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;  
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;  
     Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;  
     And mid-May's eldest child,  
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,  
     The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

## 6.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time  
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,

---

death of Tom Keats, and should be compared with the passage about his sister in the letter to Brown written from Rome on the 30th of November, 1820,—"my sister—who walks about my imagination like a ghost—she is so like Tom." In the same letter he says "it runs in my head we shall all die young."

(5) In the last line but one of this stanza, both the manuscript and the *Annals* read *sweetest wine*.

(6) Compare with the second line Shelley's words in the Preface to *Adonais*, "It

*POEMS PUBLISHED WITH LAMIA, ETC., 1820.*

Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,  
To take into the air my quiet breath;  
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,  
To cease upon the midnight with no pain,  
While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad  
In such an ecstasy!  
Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain—  
To thy high requiem become a sod.

7.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!  
No hungry generations tread thee down;  
The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
In ancient days by emperor and clown:  
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
She stood in tears amid the alien corn;  
The same that oft-times hath  
Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam  
Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

8.

Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well  
 As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.  
 Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades  
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,  
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep  
 In the next valley-glades:  
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?  
 Fled is that music: — Do I wake or sleep?

## ODE ON A GRECIAN URN.\*

## I.

THOU still unravish'd bride of quietness,  
 Thou foster-child of silence and slow time,  
 Sylvan historian, who canst thus express  
 A flowery tale more sweetly than our rhyme:  
 What leaf-fring'd legend haunts about thy shape  
 Of deities or mortals, or of both,  
 In Tempe or the dales of Arcady?  
 What men or gods are these? What maidens loth?  
 What mad pursuit? What struggle to escape?  
 What pipes and timbrels? What wild ecstasy?

---

Was it a vision? Or a waking dream?  
 Fled is that music? Do I wake or sleep?

\* This Ode is mentioned by Lord Houghton in connexion with the *Ode to a Nightingale* as belonging to the Spring of 1819; and we are informed of both alike that, soon after they were composed, Keats "repeated, or rather chanted, them to Mr. Haydon, in the sort of recitative that so well suited his deep grave voice, as they strolled together through Kilburn meadows, leaving an indelible impression on the mind of his surviving friend." The manuscript in Sir Charles Dilke's copy of *Endymion* is dated simply "1819." The poem appeared in Number XV of *Annals of the Fine Arts*, headed "On a Grecian Urn," and signed with a "dagger" (†). It would seem to have appeared in January 1820. There is some reason for thinking that the particular urn which inspired this beautiful poem is a somewhat weather-beaten work in marble still preserved in the garden of Holland House, and figured in Piranesi's *Vasi e Candelabri*.

(1) In the *Annals*, in line 1 of this stanza, there is a comma after *still*, which we do not find in the *Lamia* volume or in the manuscript. In line 8 in the *Annals* we read *What Gods or Men are these?* And both in the magazine and in the manuscript, the last line but one is —

What love? what dance? what struggle to escape?

The version of the volume, given in the text, is an obvious revision.

*POEMS PUBLISHED WITH LAMIA, ETC., 1820.*

2.

Heard melodies are sweet, but those unheard  
Are sweeter; therefore, ye soft pipes, play on;  
Not to the sensual ear, but, more endear'd,  
Pipe to the spirit ditties of no tone:  
Fair youth, beneath the trees, thou canst not leave  
Thy song, nor ever can those trees be bare;  
Bold Lover, never, never canst thou kiss,  
Though winning near the goal — yet, do not grieve;  
She cannot fade, though thou hast not thy bliss,  
For ever wilt thou love, and she be fair!

3.

Ah, happy, happy boughs! that cannot shed  
Your leaves, nor ever bid the Spring adieu;  
And, happy melodist, unwearied,  
For ever piping songs for ever new;  
More happy love! more happy, happy love!  
For ever warm and still to be enjoy'd,  
For ever panting, and for ever young;



ODE TO PSYCHE.

And, little town, thy streets for evermore  
Will silent be ; and not a soul to tell  
Why thou art desolate, can e'er return.

5

O Attic shape ! Fair attitude ! with brede  
Of marble men and maidens overwrought,  
With forest branches and the trodden weed ;  
Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought  
As doth eternity : Cold Pastoral !  
When old age shall this generation waste,  
Thou shalt remain, in midst of other woe  
Than ours, a friend to man, to whom thou say'st,  
" Beauty is truth, truth beauty," — that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.

ODE TO PSYCHE.

O GODDESS ! hear these tuneless numbers, wrung  
By sweet enforcement and remembrance dear,  
And pardon that thy secrets should be sung  
Even into thine own soft-conched ear :  
Surely I dreamt to-day, or did I see  
The winged Psyche with awaken'd eyes ?  
I wander'd in a forest thoughtlessly,  
And, on the sudden, fainting with surprise,  
Saw two fair creatures, couched side by side

5

(5) In the manuscript there is a comma after *maidens* in line 2, and none after *overwrought* ; but the preferable punctuation of the text is in both of the printed versions. In line 7 the manuscript and the *Annals* agree in reading *wilt* for *shalt*. In regard to the two final lines the version of the *Lamia* volume is adopted above. In the manuscript there are no turned commas ; and in the *Annals* the two lines are thus :

Beauty is Truth, Truth Beauty. — That is all  
Ye know on Earth, and all ye need to know.

This seems to confirm the limitation of the Urn's moral to the five words indicated in the text ; and, although I have not thought it worth while to note all the variations of pointing and capitalling of the *Annals* version, I find them very characteristic of Keats, and suggestive of accurate printing from a fair manuscript of his. But for this I should have been disposed to regard the words

that is all  
Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know

as a part of the Urn's lesson, and not as the poet's personal comment.

*POEMS PUBLISHED WITH LAMIA, ETC., 1820.*

In deepest grass, beneath the whisp'ring roof Of leaves and trembled blossoms, where there ran A brooklet, scarce espied :	10
And hush'd, cool-rooted flowers, fragrant-eyed, Blue, silver-white, and budded Tyrian, They lay calm-breathing, on the bedded grass ; Their arms embraced, and their pinions too ; Their lips touch'd not, but had not bade adieu, As if disjoined by soft-handed slumber, And ready still past kisses to outnumber At tender eye-dawn of aureorean love :	15
The winged boy I knew ; But who wast thou, O happy, happy dove ? His Psyche true !	20
The latest born and loveliest vision far Of all Olympus' faded hierarchy ! Fairer than Phœbe's sapphire-region'd star, Or Vesper, amorous glow-worm of the sky ; Fairer than these, though temple thou hast none, Nor altar heap'd with flowers ; Or virgin-choir to make delicious moan Upon the midnight hours ;	25
	30



FANCY.

299

When holy were the haunted forest boughs,  
Holy the air, the water, and the fire ;  
Yet even in these days so far retir'd 40  
From happy pieties, thy lucent fans,  
Fluttering among the faint Olympians,  
I see, and sing, by my own eyes inspir'd.  
So let me be thy choir, and make a moan  
Upon the midnight hours ; 45  
Thy voice, thy lute, thy pipe, thy incense sweet  
From swung censer teeming ;  
Thy shrine, thy grove, thy oracle, thy heat  
Of pale-mouth'd prophet dreaming.

Yes, I will be thy priest, and build a fane 50  
In some untrodden region of my mind,  
Where branched thoughts, new grown with pleasant pain,  
Instead of pines shall murmur in the wind :  
Far, far around shall those dark-cluster'd trees  
Fledge the wild-ridged mountains steep by steep ; 55  
And there by zephyrs, streams, and birds, and bees,  
The moss-lain Dryads shall be lull'd to sleep ;  
And in the midst of this wide quietness  
A rosy sanctuary will I dress  
With the wreath'd trellis of a working brain, 60  
With buds, and bells, and stars without a name,  
With all the gardener Fancy e'er could feign,  
Who breeding flowers, will never breed the same :  
And there shall be for thee all soft delight  
That shadowy thought can win, 65  
A bright torch, and a casement ope at night,  
To let the warm Love in !

FANCY.

EVER let the Fancy roam,  
Pleasure never is at home :  
At a touch sweet pleasure melteth,  
Like to bubbles when rain pelteth ;  
Then let winged Fancy wander 5

---

Sir Charles Dilke's copy of *Endymion* contains a very interesting copy of these verses, dated 1818, from which an extract was given in *The Athenæum* of the 15th



*POEMS PUBLISHED WITH LAMIA, ETC., 1820.*

Through the thought still spread beyond her:  
Open wide the mind's cage-door,  
She'll dart forth, and cloudward soar.  
O sweet Fancy! let her loose;  
Summer's joys are spoilt by use, 10  
And the enjoying of the Spring  
Fades as does its blossoming;  
Autumn's red-lipp'd fruitage too,  
Blushing through the mist and dew,  
Cloys with tasting: What do then? 15  
Sit thee by the ingle, when  
The sear faggot blazes bright,  
Spirit of a winter's night;  
When the soundless earth is muffled,  
And the caked snow is shuffled, 20  
From the ploughboy's heavy shoon;  
When the Night doth meet the Noon  
In a dark conspiracy  
To banish Even from her sky.  
Sit thee there, and send abroad, 25  
With a mind self-overaw'd,  
Fancy, high-commission'd: — send her!  
She has vassals to attend her:

Rustle of the reaped corn ;  
 Sweet birds antheming the morn :  
 And, in the same moment — hark !  
 'Tis the early April lark,  
 Or the rooks, with busy *caw*, 45  
 Foraging for sticks and straw.  
 Thou shalt, at one glance, behold  
 The daisy and the marigold ;  
 White-plum'd lillies, and the first  
 Hedge-grown primrose that hath burst ; 50  
 Shaded hyacinth, alway  
 Sapphire queen of the mid-May ;  
 And every leaf, and every flower  
 Pearled with the self-same shower.  
 Thou shalt see the field-mouse peep 55  
 Meagre from its celled sleep ;  
 And the snake all winter-thin  
 Cast on sunny bank its skin ;  
 Freckled nest-eggs thou shalt see  
 Hatching in the hawthorn-tree, 60  
 When the hen-bird's wing doth rest  
 Quiet on her mossy nest ;  
 Then the hurry and alarm  
 When the bee-hive casts its swarm ;  
 Acorns ripe down-pattering, 65  
 While the autumn breezes sing.

Oh, sweet Fancy ! let her loose ;  
 Every thing is spoilt by use :

---

(43-5) In the manuscript these lines stand thus :

And in the same moment hark  
 To the early April lark  
 And the rooks with busy *caw*...

(50) In the manuscript we read *Hedge-row primrose*.

(54) In the manuscript we read *same soft shower*.

(57-8) In the manuscript, thus —

And the snake all winter-shrank  
 Cast its skin on sunny bank...

(66) There is an additional couplet after this line in the manuscript —

For the same sleek-throated mouse  
 To store up in its winter house.

(67-8) Instead of this couplet the manuscript has the following four lines :

O sweet fancy let her loose !  
 Every sweet is spoilt by use  
 Every pleasure every joy  
 Not a mistress but doth cloy...

*POEMS PUBLISHED WITH LAMIA, ETC., 1820.*

Where's the cheek that doth not fade, Too much gaz'd at? Where's the maid Whose lip mature is ever new?	70
Where's the eye, however blue, Doth not weary? Where's the face One would meet in every place? Where's the voice, however soft, One would hear so very oft?	75
At a touch sweet Pleasure melteth Like to bubbles when rain pelteth. Let, then, winged Fancy find Thee a mistress to thy mind :	80
Dulcet-ey'd as Ceres' daughter, Ere the God of Torment taught her How to frown and how to chide ; With a waist and with a side White as Hebe's, when her zone Slipt its golden clasp, and down Fell her kirtle to her feet, While she held the goblet sweet, And Jove grew languid. — Break the mesh Of the Fancy's silken leash ;	85 90

Quickly break her prison-string  
 And such joys as these she'll bring. —  
 Let the winged Fancy roam,  
 Pleasure never is at home.

## ODE.

[Written on the blank page before Beaumont and Fletcher's Tragi-Comedy "The Fair Maid of the Inn."]

BARDS of Passion and of Mirth,  
 Ye have left your souls on earth!  
 Have ye souls in heaven too,  
 Double-liv'd in regions new?  
 Yes, and those of heaven commune 5  
 With the spheres of sun and moon;  
 With the noise of fountains wond'rous,  
 And the parle of voices thund'rous;  
 With the whisper of heaven's trees  
 And one another, in soft ease 10  
 Seated on Elysian lawns  
 Brows'd by none but Dian's fawns;  
 Underneath large blue-bells tented,  
 Where the daisies are rose-scented,  
 And the rose herself has got 15  
 Perfume which on earth is not;  
 Where the nightingale doth sing  
 Not a senseless, tranced thing,  
 But divine melodious truth;

---

From the fact that this poem is written in Keats's Beaumont and Fletcher, now in Sir Charles Dilke's possession, and from internal evidence, we may judge it to be addressed to the brother poets of passion and mirth who wrote the tragi-comedy of *The Fair Maid of the Inn*, and not to the poets at large, as indicated by the title given in the *Golden Treasury*, to wit *Ode on the Poets*.

(4) Cancelled line in the manuscript after line 4 —  
 With the earth ones I am talking.

(5-6) Cancelled manuscript reading, —  
 that of heaven communes  
 With the spheres of Suns and Moons...

(10) In the manuscript, *another's*.

(19-20) In the manuscript there is the following uncanceled reading of this couplet

*POEMS PUBLISHED WITH LAMIA, ETC., 1820.*

Philosophic numbers smooth ; 20  
Tales and golden histories  
Of heaven and its mysteries.

Thus ye live on high, and then  
On the earth ye live again ;  
And the souls ye left behind you 25  
Teach us, here, the way to find you,  
Where your other souls are joying,  
Never slumber'd, never cloying.

Here, your earth-born souls still speak  
To mortals, of their little week ; 30  
Of their sorrows and delights ;  
Of their passions and their spites ;  
Of their glory and their shame ;  
What doth strengthen and what maim.  
Thus ye teach us, every day, 35  
Wisdom, though fled far away.

Bards of Passion and of Mirth,  
Ye have left your souls on earth !  
Ye have souls in heaven too,  
Double-liv'd in regions new ! 40



LINES ON THE MERMAID TAVERN.\*

SOULS of Poets dead and gone,  
 What Elysium have ye known,  
 Happy field or mossy cavern,  
 Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?  
 Have ye tippled drink more fine 5  
 Than mine host's Canary wine?  
 Or are fruits of Paradise  
 Sweeter than those dainty pies  
 Of venison? O generous food!  
 Drest as though bold Robin Hood 10  
 Would, with his maid Marian,  
 Sup and bowse from horn and can.

I have heard that on a day  
 Mine host's sign-board flew away,  
 Nobody knew whither, till 15  
 An astrologer's old quill  
 To a sheepskin gave the story,  
 Said he saw you in your glory,  
 Underneath a new old-sign  
 Sipping beverage divine, 20  
 And pledging with contented smack  
 The Mermaid in the Zodiac.

---

What need of fields in some far clime  
 Where Heroes, Sages, Bards sublime,  
 And all that fetched the flowing rhyme  
 From genuine springs,  
 Shall dwell together till old Time  
 Folds up his wings?

\* When Mr. Palgrave issued his beautiful *Golden Treasury* he felt it necessary to explain in connexion with this poem that "the Mermaid was the club-house of Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, and other choice spirits of that age." Probably such an explanation is considerably less necessary now than then. In Sir Charles Dilke's copy of *Endymion* is a fair manuscript of this poem, dated 1818, which shows the variations noted below.

(4) The manuscript reads *Fairer* for *Choicer*.  
 (9) The manuscript has *Old* in place of *O*.  
 (18-19) In the manuscript, *Says* for *Said*, and *new-old sign*, not *new old-sign* as in the first edition.

Souls of Poets dead and gone,  
What Elysium have ye known,  
Happy field or mossy cavern, 25  
Choicer than the Mermaid Tavern?

ROBIN HOOD.\*

TO A FRIEND.

NO! those days are gone away,  
And their hours are old and gray,  
And their minutes buried all  
Under the down-trodden pall 5  
Of the leaves of many years:  
Many times have winter's shears,  
Frozen North, and chilling East,  
Sounded tempests to the feast  
Of the forest's whispering fleeces,  
Since men knew nor rent nor leases. 10

No, the bugle sounds no more,

And the twanging bow no more ;  
 Silent is the ivory shrill  
 Past the heath and up the hill ;  
 There is no mid-forest laugh, 15  
 Where lone Echo gives the half  
 To some wight, amaz'd to hear  
 Jestng, deep in forest drear.

On the fairest time of June  
 You may go, with sun or moon, 20  
 Or the seven stars to light you,  
 Or the polar ray to right you ;  
 But you never may behold  
 Little John, or Robin bold ;  
 Never one, of all the clan, 25  
 Thrumming on an empty can  
 Some old hunting ditty, while  
 He doth his green way beguile  
 To fair hostess Merriment,  
 Down beside the pasture Trent ; 30  
 For he left the merry tale  
 Messenger for spicy ale.

(13) Cancelled reading, *And the whistle shrill is...*

(16) Cancelled reading, *No old hermit with his...* Probably it was meant to finish the line with *staff*.

(18) The draft reads —

Jests { deep in }  
           { within } a forest drear.

And there is then the following couplet, cancelled :

No more barbed arrows fly  
 Through one's own roof to the sky...

(19) In the draft thus —

In } the fairest { time }  
 On } { day } of June...

(21-2) Rejected readings, *Planets seven*, and *polar beam*.

(25-7) Cancelled reading —

Never meet one of all the clan  
 Rattling on an empty can  
 An old hunting ditty...

(29-30) In the draft, *Mistress* is struck out in favour of *Hostess*; and in the finished copy *pasture* and *Trent* are connected with a hyphen.

(31-2) In the draft —

For } he left the merry tale  
 When }  
 Messenger { to }  
           { for } spicy ale.



*POEMS PUBLISHED WITH LAMIA, ETC., 1820.*

Gone, the merry morris din ;  
Gone, the song of Gamelyn ;  
Gone, the tough-belted outlaw  
Idling in the "grenè shawe ;"  
All are gone away and past !  
And if Robin should be cast  
Sudden from his turfed grave,  
And if Marian should have  
Once again her forest days,  
She would weep, and he would craze :  
He would swear, for all his oaks,  
Fall'n beneath the dockyard strokes,  
Have rotted on the briny seas ;  
She would weep that her wild bees  
Sang not to her — strange ! that honey  
Can't be got without hard money !

So it is : yet let us sing,  
Honour to the old bow-string !  
Honour to the bugle-horn !  
Honour to the woods unshorn !  
Honour to the Lincoln green !  
Honour to the archer keen !  
Honour to tight little John



TO AUTUMN.

309

Honour to maid Marian,  
And to all the Sherwood-clan!  
Though their days have hurried by  
Let us two a burden try.

60

TO AUTUMN.\*

I.

SEASON of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease,  
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.

2.

Who hath not seen thee oft amid thy store?  
Sometimes whoever seeks abroad may find  
Thee sitting careless on a granary floor,  
Thy hair soft-lifted by the winnowing wind;  
Or on a half-reap'd furrow sound asleep,  
Drows'd with the fume of poppies, while thy hook  
Spares the next swath and all its twined flowers:

---

(61-2) Line 61 originally began with *Though their Pleasures*; and the final line stands in the draft thus —

You and I a stave will try.

The reading of the text is in the finished manuscript, as well as in the first edition.

\* This poem seems to have been just composed when Keats wrote to Reynolds from Winchester his letter of the 22nd of September 1819. He says "How beautiful the season is now. How fine the air — a temperate sharpness about it. Really, without joking, chaste weather — Dian skies. I never liked stubble-fields so much as now — aye, better than the chilly green of the Spring. Somehow, a stubble plain looks warm, in the same way that some pictures look warm. This struck me so much in my Sunday's walk that I composed upon it."

*POEMS PUBLISHED WITH LAMIA, ETC., 1820.*

And sometimes like a gleaner thou dost keep  
Steady thy laden head across a brook ;  
Or by a cyder-press, with patient look,  
Thou watchest the last oozings hours by hours.

3.

Where are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?  
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too, —  
While barred clouds bloom the soft-dying day,  
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue ;  
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn  
Among the river sallows, borne aloft  
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies ;  
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn ;  
Hedge-cricketts sing ; and now with treble soft  
The red-breast whistles from a garden-croft ;  
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

ODE ON MELANCHOLY.\*

## 2.

But when the melancholy fit shall fall  
 Sudden from heaven like a weeping cloud,  
 That fosters the droop-headed flowers all,  
 And hides the green hill in an April shroud ;  
 Then glut thy sorrow on a morning rose,  
 Or on the rainbow of the salt sand-wave,  
 Or on the wealth of globed peonies ;  
 Or if thy mistress some rich anger shows,  
 Emprison her soft hand, and let her rave,  
 And feed deep, deep upon her peerless eyes.

## 3.

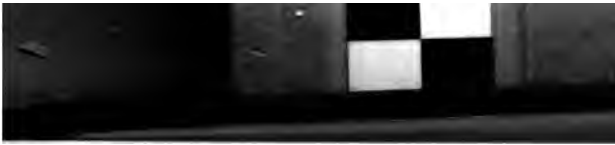
She dwells with Beauty — Beauty that must die ;  
 And Joy, whose hand is ever at his lips  
 Bidding adieu ; and aching Pleasure nigh,  
 Turning to poison while the bee-mouth sips :  
 Ay, in the very temple of Delight  
 Veil'd Melancholy has her sovran shrine,  
 Though seen of none save him whose strenuous tongue  
 Can burst Joy's grape against his palate fine ;  
 His soul shall taste the sadness of her might,  
 And be among her cloudy trophies hung.

---

Although your rudder be a dragon's tail  
 Long sever'd, yet still hard with agony,  
 Your cordage large uprootings from the skull  
 Of bald Medusa, certes you would fail  
 To find the Melancholy — whether she  
 Dreameth in any isle of Lethe dull.

His Lordship adds — “ But no sooner was this written, than the poet became conscious that the coarseness of the contrast would destroy the general effect of luxurious tenderness which it was the object of the poem to produce, and he confined the gross notion of Melancholy to less violent images,....”





## HYPERION.

[Lord Houghton records, on the authority of Brown, that *Hyperion* was begun after the death of Tom Keats, when the poet took up his residence at Wentworth Place; but Mr. Colvin asserts somewhat positively, on wholly inconclusive evidence, that the poem was begun in September or October 1818, at Tom's bedside. In the journal-letter to George and his wife in which the first allusion to Tom's death occurs, written in December 1818 or January 1819, Keats says, "I think you knew before you left England, that my next subject would be the 'Fall of Hyperion.' I went on a little with it last night...;" and on the 14th of February 1819 he writes "I have not gone on with 'Hyperion.'" In August he writes to Bailey from Winchester, "I have also been writing parts of my 'Hyperion.'..." On the 22nd of September he says in his letter to Reynolds, "I have given up 'Hyperion'—there were too many Miltonic inversions in it—Miltonic verse cannot be written but in an artful, or, rather, artist's humour. I wish to give myself up to other sensations. English ought to be kept up. It may be interesting to you to pick out some lines from 'Hyperion,' and put a mark, +, to the false beauty, proceeding from art, and one ||, to the true voice of feeling. Upon my soul, 'twas imagination; I cannot make the distinction—every now and then there is a Miltonic intonation—but I cannot make the division properly." Lord Houghton observes upon this passage that the allusion is probably to the *Vision* version of *Hyperion*; but see the note quoted below from Woodhouse. Shelley, it will be remembered, says in the Preface to *Adonais*, "I consider the fragment of Hyperion, as second to nothing that was ever produced by a writer of the same years." And in his unfinished Letter to the Editor of *The Quarterly Review* he says, "The great proportion of this piece is surely in the very highest style of poetry." In a letter to Peacock he calls *Hyperion* "an astonishing piece of writing;" and in another he says "if the *Hyperion* be not grand poetry, none has been produced by our contemporaries." Hunt remarks in *The Indicator*, very happily, "The Hyperion is a fragment,—a gigantic one, like a ruin in the desert, or the bones of the mastodon. It is truly of a piece with its subject, which is the downfall of the elder gods." Woodhouse, in his interleaved and annotated copy of *Endymion*, in which I was so fortunate as to recover so many readings from

### *HYPERION.*

draft of that poem, records under the date April 1819 that Keats sent him the fragment of *Hyperion* for perusal. "It contains," says Woodhouse, "2 books &  $\frac{1}{2}$  — (abt 900 lines in all)." As the extant fragment of the *Vision* consists of one Canto of 444 lines, and the 62 missing lines of a second Canto, while the fragment published in 1820 consists of 883 lines, that was, no doubt, what Woodhouse had: more-  
over he makes, in connexion with his note, three extracts which are not in the published version. He records that Keats "said he was dissatisfied with what he had done of it; and should not complete it." Woodhouse, like several of Keats's friends, thoroughly appreciated the untimely genius of the young poet: of *Hyperion* he says, "The nature of the verse, as well as the subject, are colossal. It has an air of calm grandeur about it which is indicative of true power. — I know of no poem with which in this respect it can be compared. — It stands at its own height in poetry, which the Elgin and Egyptian marbles are in sculpture." Again, at the close of his extracts from the manuscript, this ever so generously admiring friend well says, "The above lines, separated from the rest, give but a faint idea of the sustained grandeur and quiet majesty which characterize the poem: but they are sufficient to lead us to regret that such an attempt should have been abandoned. The poem, if completed, would have treated of the dethronement of Hyperion, the former God of the Sun, by Apollo, — and incidentally of the overthrow of Oceanus by Neptune, of Saturn by Jupiter &c., and of the



## H Y P E R I O N .

### BOOK I.

D E E P in the shady sadness of a vale  
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,  
Far from the fiery noon, and eve's one star,  
Sat gray-hair'd Saturn, quiet as a stone,  
Still as the silence round about his lair; 5  
Forest on forest hung about his head  
Like cloud on cloud. No stir of air was there,  
Not so much life as on a summer's day  
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass,  
But where the dead leaf fell, there did it rest. 10  
A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more  
By reason of his fallen divinity  
Spreading a shade: the Naiad 'mid her reeds  
Press'd her cold finger closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went, 15  
No further than to where his feet had stray'd,  
And slept there since. Upon the sodden ground  
His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,  
Unseptred; and his realmless eyes were closed;  
While his bow'd head seem'd list'ning to the Earth, 20  
His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

It seem'd no force could wake him from his place;  
But there came one, who with a kindred hand

---

(14) It seems to me that the power of realization shown in the first decade, and indeed throughout the fragment, answers all objections to the subject, and is the most absolute security for the nobility of the result which Keats would have achieved had he finished the poem. It is impossible to over-estimate the value of such a landscape, so touched in with a few strokes of titanic meaning and completeness; and the whole sentiment of gigantic despair reflected around the fallen god of the Titan dynasty, and permeating the landscape, is resumed in the most perfect manner in the incident of the motionless fallen leaf, a line almost as intense and full of the essence of poetry as any line in our language. It were ungracious to take exception to the poor Naiad; but she has not the convincing appropriateness of the rest of this sublime opening.



*HYPERION.*

[BOOK I.

touch'd his wide shoulders, after bending low  
 With reverence, though to one who knew it not. 25  
 She was a Goddess of the infant world;  
 By her in stature the tall Amazon  
 Had stood a pigmy's height: she would have ta'en  
 Achilles by the hair and bent his neck;  
 Or with a finger stay'd Ixion's wheel. 30  
 Her face was large as that of Memphian sphinx,  
 Pedestal'd haply in a palace court,  
 When sages look'd to Egypt for their lore.  
 But oh! how unlike marble was that face:  
 How beautiful, if sorrow had not made  
 Sorrow more beautiful than Beauty's self. 35  
 There was a listening fear in her regard,  
 As if calamity had but begun;  
 As if the vanward clouds of evil days  
 Had spent their malice, and the sullen rear  
 Was with its stored thunder labouring up. 40  
 One hand she press'd upon that aching spot  
 Where beats the human heart, as if just there,  
 Though an immortal, she felt cruel pain:  
 The other upon Saturn's bended neck  
 She laid, and to the level of his ear 45  
opening with parted lips, some words she spoke



“ Saturn, look up! — though wherefore, poor old King?  
“ I have no comfort for thee, no not one :  
“ I cannot say, ‘ O wherefore sleepest thou?’  
“ For heaven is parted from thee, and the earth 55  
“ Knows thee not, thus afflicted, for a God ;  
“ And ocean too, with all its solemn noise,  
“ Has from thy sceptre pass’d ; and all the air  
“ Is emptied of thine hoary majesty.  
“ Thy thunder, conscious of the new command, 60  
“ Rumbles reluctant o’er our fallen house ;  
“ And thy sharp lightning in unpractis’d hands  
“ Scorches and burns our once serene domain.  
“ O aching time ! O moments big as years !  
“ All as ye pass swell out the monstrous truth, 65  
“ And press it so upon our weary griefs  
“ That unbelief has not a space to breathe.  
“ Saturn, sleep on : — O thoughtless, why did I  
“ Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude?  
“ Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes? 70  
“ Saturn, sleep on ! while at thy feet I weep.”

As when, upon a tranced summer-night,  
Those green-rob’d senators of mighty woods,  
Tall oaks, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,  
Dream, and so dream all night without a stir, 75  
Save from one gradual solitary gust  
Which comes upon the silence, and dies off,  
As if the ebbing air had but one wave ;  
So came these words and went ; the while in tears.  
She touch’d her fair large forehead to the ground, 80  
Just where her falling hair might be outspread  
A soft and silken mat for Saturn’s feet.  
One moon, with alteration slow, had shed  
Her silver seasons four upon the night,  
And still these two were postured motionless, 85  
Like natural sculpture in cathedral cavern ;  
The frozen God still couchant on the earth,

---

otherwise, which he cannot, unless he venture upon an obscurity which would destroy our sympathy: and what is sympathy with a God, but turning him into a man? We allow, that superiority and inferiority are, after all, human terms, and imply something not so truly fine and noble as the levelling of a great sympathy and love; but poems of the present nature, like *Paradise Lost*, assume a different principle; and fortunately perhaps, it is one which it is impossible to reconcile with the other.”

And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet : Until at length old Saturn lifted up His faded eyes, and saw his kingdom gone,	90
And all the gloom and sorrow of the place, And that fair kneeling Goddess ; and then spake, As with a palsied tongue, and while his beard Shook horrid with such aspen-malady :	
‘ O tender spouse of gold Hyperion,	95
‘ Thea, I feel thee ere I see thy face ; ‘ Look up, and let me see our doom in it ; ‘ Look up, and tell me if this feeble shape ‘ Is Saturn’s ; tell me, if thou hear’st the voice ‘ Of Saturn ; tell me, if this wrinkling brow,	100
‘ Naked and bare of its great diadem, ‘ Peers like the front of Saturn. Who had power ‘ To make me desolate ? whence came the strength ? ‘ How was it nurtur’d to such bursting forth, ‘ While Fate seem’d strangled in my nervous grasp ?	105
‘ But it is so ; and I am smother’d up, ‘ And buried from all godlike exercise ‘ Of influence benign on planets pale, ‘ Of admonitions to the winds and seas, ‘ Of peaceful sway above man’s harvesting,	110
‘ And all these acts which Deity supreme	



“ Beautiful things made new, for the surprise  
“ Of the sky-children ; I will give command :  
“ Thea ! Thea ! Thea ! where is Saturn ? ”

This passion lifted him upon his feet, 135  
And made his hands to struggle in the air,  
His Druid locks to shake and ooze with sweat,  
His eyes to fever out, his voice to cease.  
He stood, and heard not Thea's sobbing deep ;  
A little time, and then again he snatch'd 140  
Utterance thus. — “ But cannot I create?  
“ Cannot I form? Cannot I fashion forth  
“ Another world, another universe,  
“ To overbear and crumble this to nought?  
“ Where is another chaos? Where? ” — That word 145  
Found way unto Olympus, and made quake  
The rebel three. — Thea was startled up,  
And in her bearing was a sort of hope,  
As thus she quick-voic'd spake, yet full of awe.

“ This cheers our fallen house : come to our friends, 150  
“ O Saturn ! come away, and give them heart ;  
“ I know the covert, for thence came I hither.”  
Thus brief ; then with beseeching eyes she went  
With backward footing through the shade a space :  
He follow'd, and she turn'd to lead the way 155  
Through aged boughs, that yielded like the mist  
Which eagles cleave upmounting from their nest.

Meanwhile in other realms big tears were shed,  
More sorrow like to this, and such like woe,  
Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of scribe : 160  
The Titans fierce, self-hid, or prison-bound,  
Groan'd for the old allegiance once more,  
And listen'd in sharp pain for Saturn's voice.  
But one of the whole mammoth-brood still kept  
His sov'reignty, and rule, and majesty ; — 165  
Blazing Hyperion on his orb'd fire  
Still sat, still snuff'd the incense, teeming up  
From man to the sun's God ; yet unsecure :  
For as among us mortals omens drear  
Fright and perplex, so also shuddered he — 170  
Not at dog's howl, or gloom-bird's hated screech,

*HYPERION.*

[BOOK I.]

Or the familiar visiting of one  
 Upon the first toll of his passing-bell,  
 Or prophesyings of the midnight lamp;  
 But horrors, portion'd to a giant nerve, 175  
 Oft made Hyperion ache. His palace bright  
 Bastion'd with pyramids of glowing gold,  
 And touch'd with shade of bronzed obelisks,  
 Glar'd a blood-red through all its thousand courts,  
 Arches, and domes, and fiery galleries; 180  
 And all its curtains of Aurorian clouds  
 Flush'd angerly: while sometimes eagle's wings,  
 Unseen before by Gods or wondering men,  
 Darken'd the place; and neighing steeds were heard,  
 Not heard before by Gods or wondering men. 185  
 Also, when he would taste the spicy wreaths  
 Of incense, breath'd aloft from sacred hills,  
 Instead of sweets, his ample palate took  
 Flavour of poisonous brass and metal sick:  
 And so, when harbour'd in the sleepy west, 190  
 After the full completion of fair day, —  
 For rest divine upon exalted couch  
 And slumber in the arms of melody,  
 He pac'd away the pleasant hours of ease  
 With stride colossal, on from hall to hall: 195



And gave a roar, as if of earthly fire, 215  
That scar'd away the meek ethereal Hours  
And made their dove-wings tremble. On he flared,  
From stately nave to nave, from vault to vault,  
Through bowers of fragrant and enwreathed light,  
And diamond-paved lustrous long arcades, 220  
Until he reach'd the great main cupola ;  
There standing fierce beneath, he stamp't his foot,  
And from the basements deep to the high towers  
Jarr'd his own golden region ; and before  
The quavering thunder thereupon had ceas'd, 225  
His voice leapt out, despite of godlike curb,  
To this result : " O dreams of day and night !  
" O monstrous forms ! O effigies of pain !  
" O spectres busy in a cold, cold gloom !  
" O lank-ear'd Phantoms of black-weeded pools ! 230  
" Why do I know ye ? why have I seen ye ? why  
" Is my eternal essence thus distraught  
" To see and to behold these horrors new ?  
" Saturn is fallen, am I too to fall ?  
" Am I to leave this haven of my rest, 235  
" This cradle of my glory, this soft clime,  
" This calm luxuriance of blissful light,  
" These crystalline pavilions, and pure fanes,  
" Of all my lucent empire ? It is left  
" Deserted, void, nor any haunt of mine. 240  
" The blaze, the splendor, and the symmetry,  
" I cannot see — but darkness, death and darkness.  
" Even here, into my centre of repose,  
" The shady visions come to domineer,  
" Insult, and blind, and stifle up my pomp. — 245  
" Fall ! — No, by Tellus and her briny robes !  
" Over the fiery frontier of my realms  
" I will advance a terrible right arm  
" Shall scare that infant thunderer, rebel Jove,  
" And bid old Saturn take his throne again." — 250  
He spake, and ceas'd, the while a heavier threat  
Held struggle with his throat but came not forth ;  
For as in theatres of crowded men  
Hubbub increases more they call out " Hush !"  
So at Hyperion's words the Phantoms pale 255  
Bestirr'd themselves, thrice horrible and cold ;  
And from the mirror'd level where he stood  
A mist arose, as from a scummy marsh.

At this, through all his bulk an agony	
Crept gradual, from the feet unto the crown,	260
Like a lithe serpent vast and muscular	
Making slow way, with head and neck convuls'd	
From over-strained might. Releas'd, he fled	
To the eastern gates, and full six dewy hours	
Before the dawn in season due should blush,	265
He breath'd fierce breath against the sleepy portals,	
Clear'd them of heavy vapours, burst them wide	
Suddenly on the ocean's chilly streams.	
The planet orb of fire, whereon he rode	
Each day from east to west the heavens through,	270
Spun round in sable curtaining of clouds;	
Not therefore veiled quite, blindfold, and hid,	
But ever and anon the glancing spheres,	
Circles, and arcs, and broad-belting colure,	
Glow'd through, and wrought upon the muffling dark	275
Sweet-shaped lightnings from the nadir deep	
Up to the zenith, — hieroglyphics old,	
Which sages and keen-ey'd astrologers	
Then living on the earth, with labouring thought	
Von from the gaze of many centuries:	280
Now lost, save what we find on remnants huge	



Upon the boundaries of day and night,  
He stretch'd himself in grief and radiance faint.  
There as he lay, the Heaven with its stars  
Look'd down on him with pity, and the voice  
Of Cælus, from the universal space,  
Thus whisper'd low and solemn in his ear.  
" O brightest of my children dear, earth-born  
" And sky-engendered, Son of Mysteries  
" All unrevealed even to the powers  
" Which met at thy creating; at whose joys  
" And palpitations sweet, and pleasures soft,  
" I, Cælus, wonder, how they came and whence;  
" And at the fruits thereof what shapes they be,  
" Distinct, and visible; symbols divine,  
" Manifestations of that beauteous life  
" Diffus'd unseen throughout eternal space:  
" Of these new-form'd art thou, oh brightest child!  
" Of these, thy brethren and the Goddesses!  
" There is sad feud among ye, and rebellion  
" Of son against his sire. I saw him fall,  
" I saw my first-born tumbled from his throne!  
" To me his arms were spread, to me his voice  
" Found way from forth the thunders round his head!  
" Pale wox I, and in vapours hid my face.  
" Art thou, too, near such doom? vague fear there is:  
" For I have seen my sons most unlike Gods.  
" Divine ye were created, and divine  
" In sad demeanour, solemn, undisturb'd,  
" Unruffled, like high Gods, ye liv'd and ruled:  
" Now I behold in you fear, hope, and wrath;  
" Actions of rage and passion; even as  
" I see them, on the mortal world beneath,  
" In men who die. — This is the grief, O Son!  
" Sad sign of ruin, sudden dismay, and fall!  
" Yet do thou strive; as thou art capable,  
" As thou canst move about, an evident God;  
" And canst oppose to each malignant hour  
" Ethereal presence: — I am but a voice;  
" My life is but the life of winds and tides,  
" No more than winds and tides can I avail: —  
" But thou canst. — Be thou therefore in the van  
" Of circumstance; yea, seize the arrow's barb  
" Before the tense string murmur. — To the earth!  
" For there thou wilt find Saturn, and his woes.



*HYPERION.*

[BOOK I.]

Meantime I will keep watch on thy bright sun,  
And of thy seasons be a careful nurse."—  
Ere half this region-whisper had come down,  
Hyperion arose, and on the stars  
    350  
    Opened his curved lids, and kept them wide  
    Until it ceas'd; and still he kept them wide:  
    And still they were the same bright, patient stars.  
    Then with a slow incline of his broad breast,  
    Like to a diver in the pearly seas,  
    355  
    Forward he stoop'd over the airy shore,  
    And plung'd all noiseless into the deep night.



## HYPERION.

### BOOK II.

**J**UST at the self-same beat of Time's wide wings  
Hyperion slid into the rustled air,  
And Saturn gain'd with Thea that sad place  
Where Cybele and the bruised Titans mourn'd.  
It was a den where no insulting light 5  
Could glimmer on their tears; where their own groans  
They felt, but heard not, for the solid roar  
Of thunderous waterfalls and torrents hoarse,  
Pouring a constant bulk, uncertain where.  
Crag jutting forth to crag, and rocks that seem'd 10  
Ever as if just rising from a sleep,  
Forehead to forehead held their monstrous horns;  
And thus in thousand hugest phantasies  
Made a fit roofing to this nest of woe.  
Instead of thrones, hard flint they sat upon, 15  
Couches of rugged stone, and slaty ridge  
Stubborn'd with iron. All were not assembled:  
Some chain'd in torture, and some wandering.  
Cœus, and Gyges, and Briaretis,  
Typhon, and Dolor, and Porphyryon, 20  
With many more, the brawniest in assault,  
Were pent in regions of laborious breath;  
Dungeon'd in opaque element, to keep  
Their clenched teeth still clench'd, and all their limbs  
Lock'd up like veins of metal, cramped and screw'd; 25  
Without a motion, save of their big hearts  
Heaving in pain, and horribly convuls'd  
With sanguine feverous boiling gurge of pulse.  
Mnemosyne was straying in the world;  
Far from her moon had Phœbe wandered; 30  
And many else were free to roam abroad,  
But for the main, here found they covert drear.  
Scarce images of life, one here, one there,

*HYPÉRIÓN.*

[BOOK II.]

ay vast and edgeways; like a dismal cirque  
of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor, 35  
When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,  
In dull November, and their chancel vault,  
The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.  
Each one kept shroud, nor to his neighbour gave  
A word, or look, or action of despair. 40  
Cæcis was one; his ponderous iron mace  
Lay by him, and a shatter'd rib of rock  
The bold of his rage, ere he thus sank and pined.  
He smother'd another; in his grasp,  
The serpent's plashy neck; its barbed tongue 45  
He squeez'd from the gorge, and all its uncurl'd length  
He laid; and because the creature could not spit  
His poison in the eyes of conquering Jove.  
Next Cottus: prone he lay, chin uppermost,  
As though in pain; for still upon the flint 50  
The ground severe his skull, with open mouth  
And eyes at horrid working. Nearest him  
Asia, born of most enormous Caf,  
Who cost her mother Tellus keener pangs,  
Though feminine, than any of her sons: 55  
More thought than woe was in her dusky face,



So leant she, not so fair, upon a tusk  
Shed from the broadest of her elephants.  
Above her, on a crag's uneasy shelf,  
Upon his elbow rais'd, all prostrate else, 65  
Shadow'd Enceladus; once tame and mild  
As grazing ox unworried in the meads;  
Now tiger-passion'd, lion-thoughted, wroth,  
He meditated, plotted, and even now  
Was hurling mountains in that second war, 70  
Not long delay'd, that scar'd the younger Gods  
To hide themselves in forms of beast and bird.  
Not far hence Atlas; and beside him prone  
Phorcus, the sire of Gorgons. Neighbour'd close  
Oceanus, and Tethys, in whose lap 75  
Sobb'd Clymene among her tangled hair.  
In midst of all lay Themis, at the feet  
Of Ops the queen all clouded round from sight;  
No shape distinguishable, more than when  
Thick night confounds the pine-tops with the clouds: 80  
And many else whose names may not be told.  
For when the Muse's wings are air-ward spread,  
Who shall delay her flight? And she must chaunt  
Of Saturn, and his guide, who now had climb'd  
With damp and slippery footing from a depth 85  
More horrid still. Above a sombre cliff  
Their heads appear'd, and up their stature grew  
Till on the level height their steps found ease:  
Then Thea spread abroad her trembling arms  
Upon the precincts of this nest of pain, 90  
And sidelong fix'd her eye on Saturn's face:  
There saw she direst strife; the supreme God  
At war with all the frailty of grief,  
Of rage, of fear, anxiety, revenge,  
Remorse, spleen, hope, but most of all despair. 95  
Against these plagues he strove in vain; for Fate  
Had pour'd a mortal oil upon his head,

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will to revise it thoroughly on giving in to its publication in 1820. Else one is fain to think that Hope and her anchor would have disappeared, together with two words not to be characterized as blots, but rather as survivals from the time of strain and strife after out of the way expressions whereof *Endymion* is so full a representation. I refer to two instances in which verbs are licentiously and as I think inartistically used instead of their cognate nouns, namely "Voices of soft *proclaim*" in line 130 of Book I, and "with fierce *convulse*" in line 129 of Book III. There is a third instance in line 64, Book II; but there the word *shelf* would not have served to express the idea involved in the use of *shelve*.

*HYPERION.*

[BOOK II.]

disappointing poison: so that Thea,  
affrighted, kept her still, and let him pass  
first onwards in, among the fallen tribe.

100

As with us mortal men, the laden heart  
persecuted more, and fever'd more,  
When it is nighing to the mournful house  
Where other hearts are sick of the same bruise;  
So Saturn, as he walk'd into the midst,  
felt faint, and would have sunk among the rest,  
but that he met Enceladus's eye,

105

Whose mightiness, and awe of him, at once  
came like an inspiration; and he shouted,

"Titans, behold your God!" at which some groan'd;

110

some started on their feet; some also shouted;  
some wept, some wail'd, all bow'd with reverence;

and Ops, uplifting her black folded veil,  
show'd her pale cheeks, and all her forehead wan,

her eye-brows thin and jet, and hollow eyes.

115

There is a roaring in the bleak-grown pines

When Winter lifts his voice; there is a noise

among immortals when a God gives sign,

With hushing finger, how he means to load



“ At war, at peace, or inter-quarreling  
“ One against one, or two, or three, or all  
“ Each several one against the other three,  
“ As fire with air loud warring when rain-floods  
“ Drown both, and press them both against earth’s face, 145  
“ Where, finding sulphur, a quadruple wrath  
“ Unhinges the poor world ; — not in that strife,  
“ Wherefrom I take strange lore, and read it deep,  
“ Can I find reason why ye should be thus :  
“ No, no-where can unriddle, though I search, 150  
“ And pore on Nature’s universal scroll  
“ Even to swooning, why ye Divinities,  
“ The first-born of all shap’d and palpable Gods,  
“ Should cower beneath what, in comparison,  
“ Is untremendous might. Yet ye are here, 155  
“ O’erwhelm’d, and spurn’d, and batter’d, ye are here !  
“ O Titans, shall I say, ‘ Arise ! ’ — Ye groan :  
“ Shall I say ‘ Crouch ! ’ — Ye groan. What can I then ?  
“ O Heaven wide ! O unseen parent dear !  
“ What can I ? Tell me, all ye brethren Gods, 160  
“ How we can war, how engine our great wrath !  
“ O speak your counsel now, for Saturn’s ear  
“ Is all a-hunger’d. Thou, Oceanus,  
“ Ponderest high and deep ; and in thy face  
“ I see, astonied, that severe content 165  
“ Which comes of thought and musing : give us help ! ”

So ended Saturn ; and the God of the Sea,  
Sophist and sage, from no Athenian grove,  
But cogitation in his watery shades,  
Arose, with locks not oozy, and began, 170  
In murmurs, which his first-endeavouring tongue  
Caught infant-like from the far-foamed sands.  
“ O ye, whom wrath consumes ! who, passion-stung,  
“ Writhe at defeat, and nurse your agonies !  
“ Shut up your senses, stifle up your ears, 175  
“ My voice is not a bellows unto ire.  
“ Yet listen, ye who will, whilst I bring proof  
“ How ye, perforce, must be content to stoop :  
“ And in the proof much comfort will I give,  
“ If we will take that comfort in its truth 180  
“ We fall by course of Nature’s law, not force  
“ Of thunder, or of Jove. Great Saturn, thou  
“ Has sifted well the atom-universe ;

*HYPERION.*

[BOOK II.]

But for this reason, that thou art the King,  
And only blind from sheer supremacy, 185  
One avenue was shaded from thine eyes,  
Through which I wandered to eternal truth.  
And first, as thou wast not the first of powers,  
So art thou not the last; it cannot be:  
Thou art not the beginning nor the end. 190  
From chaos and parental darkness came  
Light, the first fruits of that intestine broil,  
That sullen ferment, which for wondrous ends  
Was ripening in itself. The ripe hour came,  
And with it light, and light, engendering 195  
Upon its own producer, forthwith touch'd  
The whole enormous matter into life.  
Upon that very hour, our parentage,  
The Heavens and the Earth, were manifest:  
Then thou first-born, and we the giant-race, 200  
Found ourselves ruling new and beauteous realms.  
Now comes the pain of truth, to whom 'tis pain;  
O folly! for to bear all naked truths,  
And to envisage circumstance, all calm,  
That is the top of sovereignty. Mark well! 205  
As Heaven and Earth are fairer, fairer far  
Than Chaos and blank Darkness, though once chiefs;



“ In right thereof; for 'tis the eternal law  
“ That first in beauty should be first in might :  
“ Yea, by that law, another race may drive 230  
“ Our conquerors to mourn as we do now.  
“ Have ye beheld the young God of the Seas,  
“ My dispossessor? Have ye seen his face?  
“ Have ye beheld his chariot, foam'd along  
“ By noble winged creatures he hath made? 235  
“ I saw him on the calmed waters scud,  
“ With such a glow of beauty in his eyes,  
“ That it enforc'd me to bid sad farewell  
“ To all my empire : farewell sad I took,  
“ And hither came, to see how dolorous fate 240  
“ Had wrought upon ye ; and how I might best  
“ Give consolation in this woe extreme.  
“ Receive the truth, and let it be your balm.”

Whether through poz'd conviction, or disdain,  
They guarded silence, when Oceanus 245  
Left murmuring, what deepest thought can tell ?  
But so it was, none answer'd for a space,  
Save one whom none regarded, Clymene ;  
And yet she answer'd not, only complain'd,  
With hectic lips, and eyes up-looking mild, 250  
Thus wording timidly among the fierce :  
“ O Father, I am here the simplest voice,  
“ And all my knowledge is that joy is gone,  
“ And this thing woe crept in among our hearts,  
“ There to remain for ever, as I fear : 255  
“ I would not bode of evil, if I thought  
“ So weak a creature could turn off the help  
“ Which by just right should come of mighty Gods ;  
“ Yet let me tell my sorrow, let me tell  
“ Of what I heard, and how it made me weep, 260  
“ And know that we had parted from all hope.  
“ I stood upon a shore, a pleasant shore,  
“ Where a sweet clime was breathed from a land  
“ Of fragrance, quietness, and trees, and flowers.  
“ Full of calm joy it was, as I of grief ; 265  
“ Too full of joy and soft delicious warmth ;  
“ So that I felt a movement in my heart  
“ To chide, and to reproach that solitude  
“ With songs of misery, music of our woes ;  
“ And sat me down, and took a mouthed shell 270



- \* And murmur'd into it, and made melody —  
 \* O melody no more ! for while I sang,  
 \* And with poor skill let pass into the breeze  
 \* The dull shell's echo, from a bowery strand  
 \* Just opposite, an island of the sea, 275  
 \* There came enchantment with the shifting wind,  
 \* That did both drown and keep alive my ears.  
 \* I threw my shell away upon the sand,  
 \* And a wave fill'd it, as my sense was fill'd  
 \* With that new blissful golden melody. 280  
 \* A living death was in each gush of sounds,  
 \* Each family of rapturous hurried notes,  
 \* That fell, one after one, yet all at once,  
 \* Like pearl beads dropping sudden from their string :  
 \* And then another, then another strain, 285  
 \* Each like a dove leaving its olive perch,  
 \* With music wing'd instead of silent plumes,  
 \* To hover round my head, and make me sick  
 \* Of joy and grief at once. Grief overcame,  
 \* And I was stopping up my frantic ears, 290  
 \* When, past all hindrance of my trembling hands,  
 \* A voice came sweeter, sweeter than all tane,  
 \* And still it cry'd, ' Apollo ! young Apollo !

" Not thunderbolt on thunderbolt, till all  
 " That rebel Jove's whole armoury were spent,  
 " Not world on world upon these shoulders piled,  
 " Could agonize me more than baby-words  
 " In midst of this dethronement horrible. 315  
 " Speak! roar! shout! yell! ye sleepy Titans all.  
 " Do ye forget the blows, the buffets vile?  
 " Are ye not smitten by a youngling arm?  
 " Dost thou forget, sham Monarch of the Waves,  
 " Thy scalding in the seas? What, have I rous'd 320  
 " Your spleens with so few simple words as these?  
 " O joy! for now I see ye are not lost:  
 " O joy! for now I see a thousand eyes  
 " Wide glaring for revenge!" — As this he said,  
 He lifted up his stature vast, and stood, 325  
 Still without intermission speaking thus:  
 " Now ye are flames, I'll tell you how to burn,  
 " And purge the ether of our enemies;  
 " How to feed fierce the crooked stings of fire,  
 " And singe away the swollen clouds of Jove, 330  
 " Stifling that puny essence in its tent.  
 " O let him feel the evil he hath done;  
 " For though I scorn Oceanus's lore,  
 " Much pain have I for more than loss of realms:  
 " The days of peace and slumberous calm are fled; 335  
 " Those days, all innocent of scathing war,  
 " When all the fair Existences of heaven  
 " Came open-eyed to guess what we would speak: —  
 " That was before our brows were taught to frown,  
 " Before our lips knew else but solemn sounds; 340  
 " That was before we knew the winged thing,  
 " Victory, might be lost, or might be won.  
 " And be ye mindful that Hyperion,  
 " Our brightest brother, still is disgraced —  
 " Hyperion, lo! his radiance is here!" 345

All eyes were on Enceladus's face,  
 And they beheld, while still Hyperion's name  
 Flew from his lips up to the vaulted rocks,  
 A pallid gleam across his features stern:  
 Not savage, for he saw full many a God 350  
 Wroth as himself. He look'd upon them all,  
 And in each face he saw a gleam of light,  
 But splendor in Saturn's, whose hoar locks

Shone like the bubbling foam about a keel When the prow sweeps into a midnight cove.	355
In pale and silver silence they remain'd, Till suddenly a splendour, like the morn, Pervaded all the beetling gloomy steeps, All the sad spaces of oblivion, And every gulf, and every chasm old,	360
And every height, and every sullen depth, Voiceless, or hoarse with loud tormented streams : And all the everlasting cataracts, And all the headlong torrents far and near, Mantled before in darkness and huge shade,	365
Now saw the light and made it terrible. It was Hyperion : — a granite peak His bright feet touch'd, and there he stay'd to view The misery his brilliance had betray'd To the most hateful seeing of itself.	370
Golden his hair of short Numidian curl, Regal his shape majestic, a vast shade In midst of his own brightness, like the bulk Of Memnon's image at the set of sun To one who travels from the dusking East :	375
Sighs, too, as mournful as that Memnon's harp	



## HYPERION.

### BOOK III.

THUS in alternate uproar and sad peace,  
Amazed were those Titans utterly.  
O leave them, Muse! O leave them to their woes;  
For thou art weak to sing such tumults dire :  
A solitary sorrow best befits 5  
Thy lips, and antheming a lonely grief.  
Leave them, O Muse! for thou anon wilt find  
Many a fallen old Divinity  
Wandering in vain about bewildered shores.  
Meantime touch piously the Delphic harp, 10  
And not a wind of heaven but will breathe  
In aid soft warble from the Dorian flute ;  
For lo! 'tis for the Father of all verse.  
Flush every thing that hath a vermeil hue,  
Let the rose glow intense and warm the air, 15  
And let the clouds of even and of morn  
Float in voluptuous fleeces o'er the hills ;  
Let the red wine within the goblet boil,  
Cold as a bubbling well ; let faint-lipp'd shells, 20  
On sands, or in great deeps, vermilion turn  
Through all their labyrinths ; and let the maid  
Blush keenly, as with some warm kiss surpris'd.  
Chief isle of the embowered Cyclades,  
Rejoice, O Delos, with thine olives green,  
And poplars, and lawn-shading palms, and beech, 25  
In which the Zephyr breathes the loudest song,  
And hazels thick, dark-stemm'd beneath the shade :  
Apollo is once more the golden theme !  
Where was he, when the Giant of the Sun  
Stood bright, amid the sorrow of his peers? 30  
Together had he left his mother fair  
And his twin-sister sleeping in their bower,  
And in the morning twilight wandered forth

Beside the osiers of a rivulet,  
 Full ankle-deep in lillies of the vale. 35  
 The nightingale had ceas'd, and a few stars  
 Were lingering in the heavens, while the thrush  
 Began calm-throated. Throughout all the isle  
 There was no covert, no retired cave  
 Unhaunted by the murmurous noise of waves,  
 Though scarcely heard in many a green recess. 40  
 He listen'd, and he wept, and his bright tears  
 Went trickling down the golden bow he held.  
 Thus with half-shut suffused eyes he stood,  
 While from beneath some cumbrous boughs hard by 45  
 With solemn step an awful Goddess came,  
 And there was purport in her looks for him,  
 Which he with eager guess began to read  
 Perplex'd, the while melodiously he said :  
 ' How cam'st thou over the unfooted sea? 50  
 ' Or hath that antique mien and robed form  
 ' Mov'd in these vales invisible till now?  
 ' Sure I have heard those vestments sweeping o'er  
 ' The fallen leaves, when I have sat alone  
 ' In cool mid-forest. Surely I have traced 55  
 ' The rustle of those ample skirts about



“ For prophecies of thee, and for the sake  
“ Of loveliness new born.” — Apollo then,  
With sudden scrutiny and gloomless eyes, 80  
Thus answer’d, while his white melodious throat  
Throbb’d with the syllables. — “ Mnemosyne!  
“ Thy name is on my tongue, I know not how ;  
“ Why should I tell thee what thou so well seest?  
“ Why should I strive to show what from thy lips 85  
“ Would come no mystery? For me, dark, dark,  
“ And painful vile oblivion seals my eyes :  
“ I strive to search wherefore I am so sad,  
“ Until a melancholy numbs my limbs ;  
“ And then upon the grass I sit, and moan, 90  
“ Like one who once had wings. — O why should I  
“ Feel curs’d and thwarted, when the liegeless air  
“ Yields to my step aspirant? why should I  
“ Spurn the green turf as hateful to my feet?  
“ Goddess benign, point forth some unknown thing : 95  
“ Are there not other regions than this isle?  
“ What are the stars? There is the sun, the sun !  
“ And the most patient brilliance of the moon !  
“ And stars by thousands ! Point me out the way  
“ To any one particular beauteous star, 100  
“ And I will flit into it with my lyre,  
“ And make its silvery splendour pant with bliss.  
“ I have heard the cloudy thunder : Where is power?  
“ Whose hand, whose essence, what divinity  
“ Makes this alarum in the elements, 105  
“ While I here idle listen on the shores  
“ In fearless yet in aching ignorance?  
“ O tell me, lonely Goddess, by thy harp,  
“ That waileth every morn and eventide,  
“ Tell me why thus I rave, about these groves ! 110  
“ Mute thou remainest — Mute ! yet I can read  
“ A wondrous lesson in thy silent face :  
“ Knowledge enormous makes a God of me.  
“ Names, deeds, grey legends, dire events, rebellions,  
“ Majesties, sovran voices, agonies, 115  
“ Creations and destroyings, all at once  
“ Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,  
“ And deify me, as if some blithe wine  
“ Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk.  
“ And so become immortal.” — Thus the God, 120  
While his enkindled eyes, with level glance

Beneath his white soft temples, stedfast kept  
 Trembling with light upon Mnemosyne.  
 Soon wild commotions shook him, and made flush  
 All the immortal fairness of his limbs; 125  
 Lost like the struggle at the gate of death;  
 Or liker still to one who should take leave  
 Of pale immortal death, and with a pang  
 As hot as death's is chill, with fierce convulse  
 Die into life: so young Apollo anguish'd: 130  
 His very hair, his golden tresses famed  
 Kept undulation round his eager neck.  
 During the pain Mnemosyne upheld  
 Her arms as one who prophesied. — At length  
 Apollo shriek'd; — and lo! from all his limbs 135  
 Celestial \* \* \* \* \*  
 \* \* \* \* \*

THE END.

36) Hunt says of this part of the fragment, "It strikes us that there is something too effeminate and human in the way in which Apollo receives the exaltation which his wisdom is giving him. He weeps and wonders somewhat too fondly;



## HYPERION : A VISION.

[This remarkable production was mentioned by Lord Houghton in the *Life, Letters &c.* as a re-cast, but remained in manuscript until Lord Houghton contributed it to the third Volume of the *Bibliographical and Historical Miscellanies* of the Philobiblon Society (1856-57), in doubt whether it was a re-cast or a draft. A few copies of it were also printed separately from the *Miscellanies*. The fragment was afterwards published in the Appendix to "a new edition" of *The Life and Letters of John Keats* issued by his Lordship in 1867 through Messrs. Moxon and Co. On that occasion it was said to be without doubt the first draft. But Lord Houghton must have failed to consult his manuscript memoir by Charles Brown, wherein, as Mr. Colvin has stated, the *Vision* is distinctly said to be a late reconstruction. It will be seen that, although a great deal of the *Vision* is special thereto, there are large passages from the epic version of *Hyperion*. A comparison of passages which are substantially identical while varying in detail perhaps affords the most astounding instance on record of the loss of artistic power and perception under physical decay and mental agony. — H. B. F.]







## HYPERION, A VISION:

### ATTEMPTED RECONSTRUCTION OF THE POEM.

FANATICS have their dreams, wherewith they weave  
A paradise for a sect; the savage, too,  
From forth the loftiest fashion of his sleep  
Guesses at heaven; pity these have not  
Trac'd upon vellum or wild Indian leaf 5  
The shadows of melodious utterance,  
But bare of laurel they live, dream, and die;  
For Poesy alone can tell her dreams, —  
With the fine spell of words alone can save  
Imagination from the sable chain 10  
And dumb enchantment. Who alive can say,  
“Thou art no Poet — may'st not tell thy dreams?”  
Since every man whose soul is not a clod  
Hath visions and would speak, if he had loved,  
And been well nurtured in his mother tongue. 15  
Whether the dream now purpos'd to rehearse  
Be poet's or fanatic's will be known  
When this warm scribe, my hand, is in the grave.

Methought I stood where trees of every clime,  
Palm, myrtle, oak, and sycamore, and beech, 20  
With plantane and spice-blossoms, made a screen,  
In neighbourhood of fountains (by the noise  
Soft-showering in mine ears), and (by the touch  
Of scent) not far from roses. Twining round  
I saw an arbour with a drooping roof 25  
Of trellis vines, and bells, and larger blooms,  
Like floral censers, swinging light in air;  
Before its wreathed doorway, on a mound  
Of moss, was spread a feast of summer fruits,  
Which, nearer seen, seem'd refuse of a meal 30  
By angel tasted or our Mother Eve;  
For empty shells were scatter'd on the grass,

And grapestalks but half-bare, and remnants more  
 Sweet-smelling, whose pure kinds I could not know.

Still was more plenty than the fabled horn 35  
 Thrice emptied could pour forth at banqueting,  
 For Proserpine return'd to her own fields,  
 Where the white heifers low. And appetite,  
 More yearning than on earth I ever felt,  
 Growing within, I ate deliciously, — 40  
 And, after not long, thirsted; for thereby  
 I stood a cool vessel of transparent juice  
 Sipp'd by the wander'd bee, the which I took,  
 And pledging all the mortals of the world,  
 And all the dead whose names are in our lips, 45  
 Drank. That full draught is parent of my theme.  
 No Asian poppy nor elixir fine  
 Of the soon-fading, jealous, Caliphat,  
 No poison gender'd in close monkish cell,  
 No thin the scarlet conclave of old men, 50  
 Could so have rapt unwilling life away.  
 Among the fragrant husks and berries crush'd  
 Upon the grass, I struggled hard against  
 The domineering potion, but in vain.  
 The cloudy swoon came on, and down I sank, 55  
 Like a Silenus on an antique vase.



*RECONSTRUCTION OF "HYPERION."* 343

Ran imageries from a sombre loom.  
All in a mingled heap confus'd there lay  
Robes, golden tongs, censer and chafing-dish,  
Girdles, and chains, and holy jewelries. 80

Turning from these with awe, once more I raised  
My eyes to fathom the space every way :  
The embossed roof, the silent massy range  
Of columns north and south, ending in mist  
Of nothing ; then to eastward, where black gates 85  
Were shut against the sunrise evermore ;  
Then to the west I look'd, and saw far off  
An image, huge of feature as a cloud,  
At level of whose feet an altar slept,  
To be approach'd on either side by steps 90  
And marble balustrade, and patient travail  
To count with toil the innumerable degrees.  
Towards the altar sober-pac'd I went,  
Repressing haste as too unholy there ;  
And, coming nearer, saw beside the shrine 95  
One ministering ; and there arose a flame  
When in mid-day the sickening east-wind  
Shifts sudden to the south, the small warm rain  
Melts out the frozen incense from all flowers,  
And fills the air with so much pleasant health 100  
That even the dying man forgets his shroud ; —  
Even so that lofty sacrificial fire,  
Sending forth Maian incense, spread around  
Forgetfulness of everything but bliss,  
And clouded all the altar with soft smoke ; 105  
From whose white fragrant curtains thus I heard  
Language pronounc'd : " If thou canst not ascend  
These steps, die on that marble where thou art.  
Thy flesh, near cousin to the common dust,  
Will parch for lack of nutriment ; thy bones 110  
Will wither in few years, and vanish so  
That not the quickest eye could find a grain  
Of what thou now art on that pavement cold.  
The sands of thy short life are spent this hour,  
And no hand in the universe can turn 115  
Thy hourglass, if these gummed leaves be burnt  
Ere thou canst mount up these immortal steps."  
I heard, I look'd : two senses both at once,  
So fine, so subtle, felt the tyranny

RECONSTRUCTION OF "HYPERION."

f that fierce threat and the hard task proposed. 120  
rodigious seem'd the toil; the leaves were yet  
urning, when suddenly a palsied chill  
truck from the paved level up my limbs,  
nd was ascending quick to put cold grasp  
pon those streams that pulse beside the throat. 125  
shriek'd, and the sharp anguish of my shriek  
tung my own ears; I strove hard to escape  
he numbness, strove to gain the lowest step.  
low, heavy, deadly was my pace: the cold  
rew stifling, suffocating at the heart; 130  
nd when I clasp'd my hands I felt them not.  
ne minute before death my ic'd foot touch'd  
he lowest stair; and, as it touch'd, life seem'd  
o pour in at the toes; I mounted up  
s once fair angels on a ladder flew 135  
rom the green turf to heaven. "Holy Power,"  
ry'd I, approaching near the horned shrine,  
What am I that should so be sav'd from death?  
What am I that another death come not  
o choke my utterance, sacrilegious, here?" 140  
hen said the veiled shadow: "Thou hast felt  
What 'tis to die and live again before



*RECONSTRUCTION OF "HYPERION."* 345

No music but a happy-noted voice :  
They come not here, they have no thought to come ; 165  
And thou art here, for thou art less than they.  
What benefit canst thou do, or all thy tribe,  
To the great world? Thou art a dreaming thing,  
A fever of thyself: think of the earth ;  
What bliss, even in hope, is there for thee? 170  
What haven? every creature hath its home,  
Every sole man hath days of joy and pain,  
Whether his labours be sublime or low —  
The pain alone, the joy alone, distinct :  
Only the dreamer venoms all his days, 175  
Bearing more woe than all his sins deserve.  
Therefore, that happiness be somewhat shared,  
Such things as thou art are admitted oft  
Into like gardens thou didst pass erewhile,  
And suffer'd in these temples: for that cause 180  
Thou standest safe beneath this statue's knees."  
" That I am favour'd for unworthiness,  
By such propitious parley medicined  
In sickness not ignoble, I rejoice,  
Aye, and could weep for love of such award." 185  
So answer'd I, continuing, " If it please,  
Majestic shadow, tell me where I am,  
Whose altar this, for whom this incense curls ;  
What image this whose face I cannot see  
For the broad marble knees ; and who thou art, 190  
Of accent feminine so courteous? "

Then the tall shade, in drooping linen veil'd,  
Spoke out, so much more earnest, that her breath  
Stirr'd the thin folds of gauze that drooping hung  
About a golden censer from her hand 195  
Pendent ; and by her voice I knew she shed  
Long-treasured tears. " This temple, sad and lone,  
Is all spar'd from the thunder of a war  
Foughten long since by giant hierarchy  
Against rebellion: this old image here, 200  
Whose carved features wrinkled as he fell,  
Is Saturn's ; I, Moneta, left supreme,  
Sole goddess of this desolation."  
I had no words to answer, for my tongue,  
Useless, could find about its roofed home 205  
No syllable of a fit majesty

To make rejoinder to Moneta's mourn :  
 There was a silence, while the altar's blaze  
 Was fainting for sweet food. I look'd thereon,  
 And on the paved floor, where nigh were piled 210  
 Faggots of cinnamon, and many heaps  
 Of other crisped spicewood : then again  
 I look'd upon the altar, and its horns  
 Whiten'd with ashes, and its languorous flame,  
 And then upon the offerings again ; 215  
 And so, by turns, till sad Moneta cry'd :  
 "The sacrifice is done, but not the less  
 Will I be kind to thee for thy good will.  
 My power, which to me is still a curse,  
 Shall be to thee a wonder ; for the scenes 220  
 Still swooning vivid through my globed brain,  
 With an electral changing misery,  
 Thou shalt with these dull mortal eyes behold  
 Free from all pain, if wonder pain thee not."  
 As near as an immortal's sphered words 225  
 Could to a mother's soften were these last :  
 And yet I had a terror of her robes,  
 And chiefly of the veils that from her brow  
 Hung pale, and curtain'd her in mysteries,  
 That made my heart too small to hold its blood



RECONSTRUCTION OF "HYPERION."

347

So, at the sad view of Moneta's brow,  
I ask'd to see what thing the hollow brow  
Behind environ'd: what high tragedy  
In the dark secret chambers of her skull  
Was acting, that could give so dread a stress 255  
To her cold lips, and fill with such a light  
Her planetary eyes, and touch her voice  
With such a sorrow? "Shade of Memory!"  
Cried I, with act adorant at her feet,  
"By all the gloom hung round thy fallen house, 260  
By this last temple, by the golden age,  
By Great Apollo, thy dear Foster-child,  
And by thyself, forlorn divinity,  
The pale Omega of a wither'd race,  
Let me behold, according as thou saidst, 265  
What in thy brain so ferments to and fro!"  
No sooner had this conjuration past  
My devout lips, than side by side we stood  
(Like a stunt bramble by a solemn pine)  
Deep in the shady sadness of a vale 270  
Far sunken from the healthy breath of morn,  
Far from the fiery noon and eve's one star.  
Onward I look'd beneath the gloomy boughs,  
And saw what first I thought an image huge,  
Like to the image pedestall'd so high 275  
In Saturn's temple; then Moneta's voice  
Came brief upon mine ear. "So Saturn sat  
When he had lost his realms;" whereon there grew  
A power within me of enormous ken  
To see as a god sees, and take the depth 280  
Of things as nimbly as the outward eye  
Can size and shape pervade. The lofty theme  
Of those few words hung vast before my mind  
With half-unravell'd web. I sat myself  
Upon an eagle's watch, that I might see, 285  
And seeing ne'er forget. No stir of life  
Was in this shrouded vale, — not so much air  
As in the zoning of a summer's day  
Robs not one light seed from the feather'd grass;  
But where the dead leaf fell there did it rest. 290  
A stream went noiseless by, still deaden'd more  
By reason of the fallen divinity

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(270-2) Compare *Hyperion*, Book I, lines 1 to 3.  
(289-306) See lines 9 to 25 of *Hyperion*, Book I.



§ RECONSTRUCTION OF "HYPERION."

Spreading more shade; the Naiad 'mid her reeds  
 'rest her cold finger closer to her lips.

Along the margin-sand large foot-marks went 295  
 No further than to where old Saturn's feet  
 had rested, and there slept how long a sleep!  
 Degraded, cold, upon the sodden ground  
 His old right hand lay nerveless, listless, dead,  
 Inseceptred, and his realmless eyes were closed; 300  
 While his bow'd head seem'd listening to the Earth,  
 His ancient mother, for some comfort yet.

It seem'd no force could wake him from his place;  
 But there came one who, with a kindred hand,  
 Touch'd his wide shoulders, after bending low 305  
 With reverence, though to one who knew it not.  
 Then came the griev'd voice of Mnemosyne,  
 And griev'd I hearken'd. "That divinity  
 Whom thou saw'st step from yon forlornest wood,  
 And with slow pace approach our fallen king, 310  
 Is Thea, softest-natured of our brood."  
 mark'd the Goddess, in fair statuary  
 surpassing wan Moneta by the head,

I have no comfort for thee ; no, not one ;  
 I cannot say, wherefore thus sleepest thou?  
 For Heaven is parted from thee, and the Earth  
 Knows thee not, so afflicted, for a god.  
 The Ocean, too, with all its solemn noise, 335  
 Has from thy sceptre pass'd ; and all the air  
 Is emptied of thy hoary majesty.  
 Thy thunder, captious at the new command,  
 Rumbles reluctant o'er our fallen house ;  
 And thy sharp lightning, in unpractis'd hands, 340  
 Scourges and burns our once serene domain.

“ With such remorseless speed still come new woes,  
 That unbelief has not a space to breathe.  
 Saturn ! sleep on : me thoughtless, why should I  
 Thus violate thy slumbrous solitude ? 345  
 Why should I ope thy melancholy eyes ?  
 Saturn ! sleep on, while at thy feet I weep.”

As when upon a tranced summer-night  
 Forests, branch-charmed by the earnest stars,  
 Dream, and so dream all night without a noise, 350  
 Save from one gradual solitary gust  
 Swelling upon the silence, dying off,  
 As if the ebbing air had but one wave,  
 So came these words and went ; the while in tears  
 She prest her fair large forehead to the earth, 355  
 Just where her fallen hair might spread in curls,  
 A soft and silken net for Saturn's feet.  
 Long, long these two were postured motionless,  
 Like sculpture builded-up upon the grave  
 Of their own power. A long awful time 360  
 I look'd upon them : still they were the same ;  
 The frozen God still bending to the earth,  
 And the sad Goddess weeping at his feet ;  
 Moneta silent. Without stay or prop  
 But my own weak mortality, I bore 365  
 The load of this eternal quietude,  
 The unchanging gloom and the three fixed shapes  
 Ponderous upon my senses, a whole moon ;  
 For by my burning brain I measured sure  
 Her silver seasons shedded on the night. 370  
 And every day by day methought I grew  
 More gaunt and ghostly. Oftentimes I pray'd

RECONSTRUCTION OF "HYPERION."

And sense, that death would take me from the vale  
And all its burthens; gasping with despair  
Of change, hour after hour I curs'd myself, 375  
Till old Saturn rais'd his faded eyes,  
And look'd around and saw his kingdom gone,  
And all the gloom and sorrow of the place,  
And that fair kneeling Goddess at his feet.

As the moist scent of flowers, and grass, and leaves, 380  
Fills forest-dells with a pervading air,  
Known to the woodland nostril, so the words  
Of Saturn fill'd the mossy glooms around,  
Even to the hollows of time-eaten oaks,  
And to the windings of the foxes' hole, 385  
With sad, low tones, while thus he spoke, and sent  
Strange moanings to the solitary Pan.  
Moan, brethren, moan, for we are swallow'd up  
And buried from all godlike exercise  
Of influence benign on planets pale, 390  
And peaceful sway upon man's harvesting,  
And all those acts which Deity supreme  
Doth ease its heart of love in. Moan and wail;  
Moan, brethren, moan; for lo, the rebel spheres



*RECONSTRUCTION OF "HYPERION."*

351

Of strings in hollow shells ; and there shall be  
Beautiful things made new, for the surprise  
Of the sky-children." So he feebly ceased,  
With such a poor and sickly-sounding pause, 415  
Methought I heard some old man of the earth  
Bewailing earthly loss ; nor could my eyes  
And ears act with that unison of sense  
Which marries sweet sound with the grace of form,  
And dolorous accent from a tragic harp 420  
With large-limb'd visions. More I scrutinized.  
Still fixt he sat beneath the sable trees,  
Whose arms spread straggling in wild serpent forms,  
With leaves all hush'd ; his awful presence there  
(Now all was silent) gave a deadly lie 425  
To what I erewhile heard : only his lips  
Trembled amid the white curls of his beard ;  
They told the truth, though round the snowy locks  
Hung nobly, as upon the face of heaven  
A mid-day fleece of clouds. Thea arose, 430  
And stretcht her white arm through the hollow dark,  
Pointing some whither : whereat he too rose,  
Like a vast giant, seen by men at sea  
To grow pale from the waves at dull midnight.  
They melted from my sight into the woods ; 435  
Ere I could turn, Moneta cry'd, " These twain  
Are speeding to the families of grief,  
Where, rooft in by black rocks, they waste in pain  
And darkness, for no hope." And she spake on,  
As ye may read who can unwearied pass 440  
Onward from the antechamber of this dream,  
Where, even at the open doors, awhile  
I must delay, and glean my memory  
Of her high phrase — perhaps no further dare.

END OF CANTO I.

## CANTO II.

\*MORTAL, that thou may'st understand aright,  
 I humanize my sayings to thine ear,  
 Making comparisons of earthly things;  
 Or thou might'st better listen to the wind,  
 Whose language is to thee a barren noise, 5  
 Though it blows legend-laden thro' the trees.  
 In melancholy realms big tears are shed,  
 More sorrow like to this, and such like woe,  
 Too huge for mortal tongue or pen of scribe.  
 The Titans fierce, self-hid or prison-bound, 10  
 Groan for the old allegiance once more,  
 Listening in their doom for Saturn's voice.  
 But one of the whole eagle-brood still keeps  
 His sovereignty, and rule, and majesty:  
 Blazing Hyperion on his orb'd fire 15  
 Still sits, still snuffs the incense teeming up  
 From Man to the Sun's God — yet insecure.  
 For as upon the earth dire prodigies  
 Right and perplex, so also shudders he;



RECONSTRUCTION OF "HYPERION."

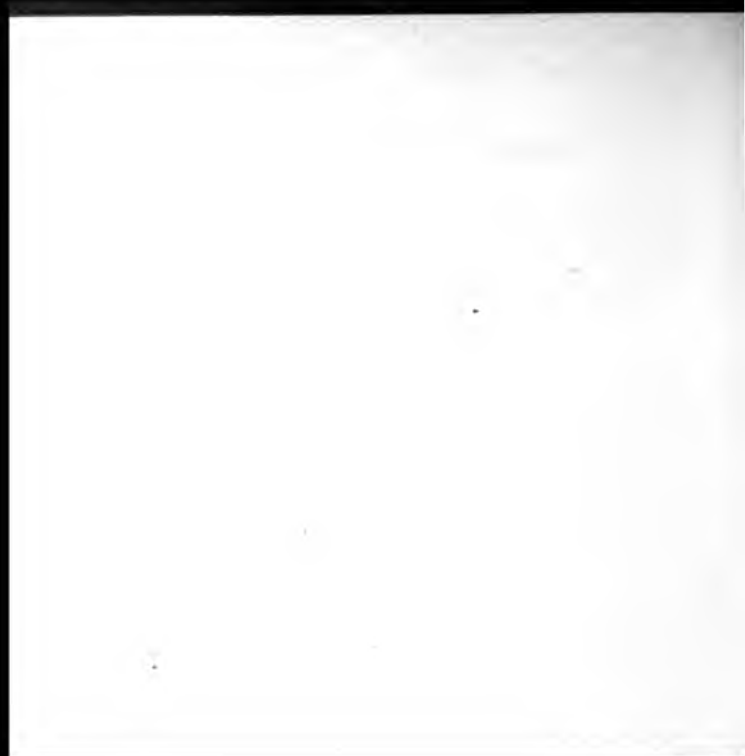
353

He paces through the pleasant hours of ease,  
With strides colossal, on from hall to hall, 40  
While far within each aisle and deep recess  
His winged minions in close clusters stand  
Amaz'd, and full of fear; like anxious men,  
Who on a wide plain gather in sad troops,  
When earthquakes jar their battlements and towers. 45  
Even now where Saturn, rous'd from icy trance,  
Goes step for step with Thea from yon woods,  
Hyperion, leaving twilight in the rear,  
Is sloping to the threshold of the West.  
Thither we tend." Now in the clear light I stood, 50  
Reliev'd from the dusk vale. Mnemosyne  
Was sitting on a square-edg'd polish'd stone,  
That in its lucid depth reflected pure  
Her priestess' garments. My quick eyes ran on  
From stately nave to nave, from vault to vault, 55  
Through bow'rs of fragrant and enwreathed light,  
And diamond-paved lustrous long arcades.  
Anon rush'd by the bright Hyperion;  
His flaming robes stream'd out beyond his heels,  
And gave a roar as if of earthy fire, 60  
That scar'd away the meek ethereal hours,  
And made their dove-wings tremble. On he flared.

---

(57) Lord Houghton gives *diamond-paned* here; but as the line is otherwise identical with line 220 of Book I of *Hyperion* as printed by Keats, there can be no doubt that *diamond-paved* is the right expression.

(62) Lord Houghton notes that the manuscript ends here.

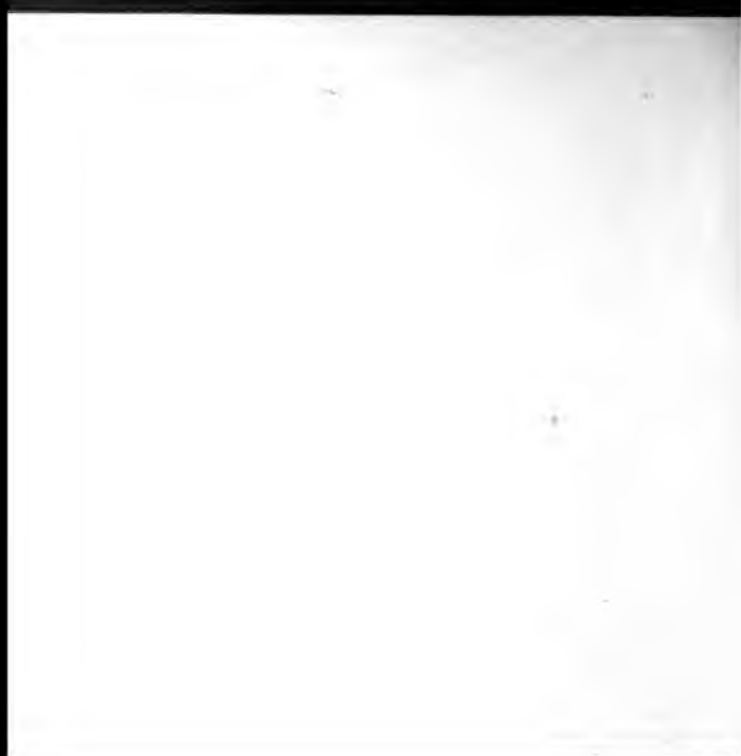




## POSTHUMOUS AND FUGITIVE POEMS.

[In this section are given under one chronology the whole of Keats's poetical writings not included in the three volumes which he issued himself. Some of the following pieces were published during his lifetime in *The Examiner*, or elsewhere, as indicated in the foot-notes; but the great mass are strictly posthumous works, for which the world is indebted to the editorship of Lord Houghton. It is not unlikely that other pieces by Keats may yet be found; for he wrote much commonplace verse when a boy; and I have reason to think that a good deal of it still exists; but it is questionable whether anything of true and sterling value still remains to be discovered. — H. B. F.]







## POSTHUMOUS AND FUGITIVE POEMS.

### ON DEATH.\*

#### I.

CAN death be sleep, when life is but a dream,  
And scenes of bliss pass as a phantom by?  
The transient pleasures as a vision seem,  
And yet we think the greatest pain's to die.

#### 2.

How strange it is that man on earth should roam,  
And lead a life of woe, but not forsake  
His rugged path; nor dare he view alone  
His future doom which is but to awake.

### SONNET TO BYRON.†

BYRON! how sweetly sad thy melody!  
Attuning still the soul to tenderness,  
As if soft Pity, with unusual stress,  
Had touch'd her plaintive lute, and thou, being by,  
Hadst caught the tones, nor suffer'd them to die.  
O'ershadowing sorrow does not make thee less  
Delightful: thou thy griefs dost dress  
With a bright halo, shining beamily,

---

\* George Keats assigns these stanzas to the year 1814. Their only interest is in the somewhat thoughtful vein they display for a youth of Keats's age at that time—eighteen or nineteen years. I am not aware that the stanzas have been printed before.

† First given in the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848), Volume I, page 13, under the date December 1814. I know of no authority for inserting the word *ever* in the seventh line; but it seems highly probable that we should read *thou thy griefs dost ever dress*, and that the word was dropped accidentally in transcription.

As when a cloud the golden moon doth veil,  
 Its sides are ting'd with a resplendent glow,  
 Through the dark robe oft amber rays prevail,  
 And like fair veins in sable marble flow;  
 Still warble, dying swan ! still tell the tale,  
 The enchanting tale, the tale of pleasing woe.

## SONNET TO CHATTERTON.\*

O CHATTERTON ! how very sad thy fate !  
 Dear child of sorrow — son of misery !  
 How soon the film of death obscur'd that eye,  
 Whence Genius mildly flash'd, and high debate.  
 How soon that voice, majestic and elate,  
 Melted in dying numbers ! Oh ! how nigh  
 Was night to thy fair morning. Thou didst die  
 A half-blown flow'ret which cold blasts amate.  
 But this is past : thou art among the stars  
 Of highest heaven : to the rolling spheres  
 Thou sweetly singest : nought thy hymning mars,  
 Above the ingrate world and human fears.

It is impossible to escape from toil  
 O' the sudden and receive thy spiring :  
 The flower must drink the nature of the soil  
 Before it can put forth its blossoming :  
 Be with me in the summer days and I  
 Will for thine honour and his pleasure try.

## ODE TO APOLLO.\*

## 1.

**I**N thy western halls of gold  
 When thou sittest in thy state,  
 Bards, that erst sublimely told  
 Heroic deeds, and sang of fate,  
 With fervour seize their adamantyne lyres,  
 Whose chords are solid rays, and twinkle radiant fires.

## 2.

Here Homer with his nervous arms  
 Strikes the twanging harp of war,  
 And even the western splendour warms,  
 While the trumpets sound afar :  
 But, what creates the most intense surprise,  
 His soul looks out through renovated eyes.

## 3.

Then, through thy Temple wide, melodious swells  
 The sweet majestic tone of Maro's lyre :  
 The soul delighted on each accent dwells, —  
 Enraptur'd dwells, — not daring to respire,  
 The while he tells of grief around a funeral pyre.

---

Mrs. Longmore's hand, Feb. 5th, 1818, but it seems to me impossible that it can have been other than an early production and of the especially Spenserian time." The transcript given varies in punctuation from previous versions ; and I have followed it in the main. But there are two accidental variations, *honour* for *honourer* in line 1, and *but* for *put* in line 12. Beyond *escape* for the '*scape* of former editions, I find no other difference of any consequence.

\* First given among the Literary Remains in the second volume of the *Life, Letters &c.* The date to which Lord Houghton assigns the poem is February 1815.

4.

'Tis awful silence then again ;  
Expectant stand the spheres ;  
Breathless the laurell'd peers,  
Nor move, till ends the lofty strain,  
Nor move till Milton's tuneful thunders cease,  
And leave once more the ravish'd heavens in peace.

5.

Thou biddest Shakspeare wave his hand,  
And quickly forward spring  
The Passions — a terrific band —  
And each vibrates the string  
That with its tyrant temper best accords,  
While from their Master's lips pour forth the inspiring words.

6.

A silver trumpet Spenser blows,  
And, as its martial notes to silence flee,  
From a virgin chorus flows

## HYMN TO APOLLO.

## 1.

GOD of the golden bow,  
 And of the golden lyre,  
 And of the golden hair,  
 And of the golden fire,  
 Charioteer  
 Of the patient year,  
 Where — where slept thine ire,  
 When like a blank idiot I put on thy wreath,  
 Thy laurel, thy glory,  
 The light of thy story,  
 Or was I a worm — too low crawling, for death?  
 O Delphic Apollo!

## 2.

The Thunderer grasp'd and grasp'd,  
 The Thunderer frown'd and frown'd;  
 The eagle's feathery name  
 For wrath became stiffen'd — the sound  
 Of breeding thunder  
 Went drowsily under,  
 Muttering to be unbound.  
 O why didst thou pity, and for a worm  
 Why touch thy soft lute  
 Till the thunder was mute,  
 Why was not I crush'd — such a pitiful germ?  
 O Delphic Apollo!

## 3.

The Pleiades were up,  
 Watching the silent air;  
 The seeds and roots in the Earth  
 Were swelling for summer fare;

---

This also was first given in the *Literary Remains*, where it stood next to the preceding, though undated. As Lord Houghton retains it between the *Ode to Apollo* and the stanzas *To Hope* (dated February 1815) in the chronological Aldine edition, the date February 1815 may be presumed to be that of the Hymn as well as that of the Ode.

*POSTHUMOUS AND FUGITIVE POEMS.*

The Ocean, its neighbour,  
Was at its old labour,  
When, who — who did dare  
To tie, like a madman, thy plant round his brow,  
And grin and look proudly,  
And blaspheme so loudly,  
And live for that honour, to stoop to thee now?  
O Delphic Apollo!

SONNET.\*

AS from the darkening gloom a silver dove  
Upsoars, and darts into the eastern light,  
On pinions that nought moves but pure delight,  
So fled thy soul into the realms above,  
Regions of peace and everlasting love;  
Where happy spirits, crown'd with circlets bright  
Of starry beam, and gloriously bedight,  
Taste the high joy none but the blest can prove.  
There thou or joinest the immortal quire  
In melodies that even heaven fair

2.

O come! let us haste to the freshening shades,  
The quaintly carv'd seats, and the opening glades;  
Where the faeries are chanting their evening hymns,  
And in the last sun-beam the sylph lightly swims.

3.

And when thou art weary I'll find thee a bed,  
Of mosses and flowers to pillow thy head:  
And there Georgiana I'll sit at thy feet,  
While my story of love I enraptur'd repeat.

4.

So fondly I'll breathe, and so softly I'll sigh,  
Thou wilt think that some amorous Zephyr is nigh:  
Yet no — as I breathe I will press thy fair knee,  
And then thou wilt know that the sigh comes from me.

• 5.

Ah! why dearest girl should we lose all these blisses?  
That mortal's a fool who such happiness misses:  
So smile acquiescence, and give me thy hand,  
With love-looking eyes, and with voice sweetly bland.

SONNET.

O H! how I love, on a fair summer's eve,  
When streams of light pour down the golden west,  
And on the balmy zephyrs tranquil rest  
The silver clouds, far — far away to leave  
All meaner thoughts, and take a sweet reprieve  
From little cares; to find, with easy quest,  
A fragrant wild, with Nature's beauty drest,  
And there into delight my soul deceive.  
There warm my breast with patriotic lore,

---

First given among the Literary Remains in the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848), with the date 1816.



*POSTHUMOUS AND FUGITIVE POEMS.*

Musing on Milton's fate — on Sydney's bier —  
 Till their stern forms before my mind arise:  
 Perhaps on wing of Poesy upsoar,  
 Full often dropping a delicious tear,  
 When some melodious sorrow spells mine eyes.

## SONNET.\*

TO A YOUNG LADY WHO SENT ME A LAUREL CROWN.

FRESH morning gusts have blown away all fear  
 From my glad bosom, — now from gloominess  
 I mount for ever — not an atom less  
 Than the proud laurel shall content my bier.  
 No! by the eternal stars! or why sit here  
 In the Sun's eye, and 'gainst my temples press  
 Apollo's very leaves, woven to bless  
 By thy white fingers and thy spirit clear.  
 Lo! who dares say, "Do this?" Who dares call down  
 My will from its high summit? \* Whom can it stand?"

In some black spell; seeing that each one tears  
 Himself from fireside joys, and Lydian airs,  
 And converse high of those with glory crown'd.  
 Still, still they toll, and I should feel a damp, —  
 A chill as from a tomb, did I not know  
 That they are dying like an outburnt lamp;  
 That 'tis their sighing, wailing ere they go  
 Into oblivion; — that fresh flowers will grow,  
 And many glories of immortal stamp.

## SONNET.\*

**A**FTER dark vapors have oppress'd our plains  
 For a long dreary season, comes a day  
 Born of the gentle South, and clears away  
 From the sick heavens all unseemly stains.  
 The anxious month, relieved of its pains,  
 Takes as a long-lost right the feel of May;  
 The eyelids with the passing coolness play  
 Like rose leaves with the drip of Summer rains.  
 The calmest thoughts came round us; as of leaves  
 Budding — fruit ripening in stillness — Autumn suns  
 Smiling at eve upon the quiet sheaves —  
 Sweet Sappho's cheek — a smiling infant's breath —  
 The gradual sand that through an hour-glass runs —  
 A woodland rivulet — a Poet's death.

---

Evening." I give the text from the transcript, which varies in some details from the Aldine text. The latter reads *toll'd* for *toll* in line 1, *To some blind spell* in line 6, *Fond* for *And* in line 8, and *as* for *ere* in line 12.

\* This sonnet appeared in *The Examiner* for the 23rd of February 1817, and is dated January 1817 in Lord Houghton's editions. In line 5 *The Examiner* reads *relieving of*; his Lordship reads *relieved from*, and again *And* for *The* at the beginning of line 9, and *sleeping* for *smiling* in line 12. The word *relieving* in the earlier version must, I think, have been a slip, and not an intentional use of *relieve* as an intransitive verb, though Keats was perhaps capable of such use in his early strife after freshness of speech.

## SONNET.

WRITTEN ON A BLANK SPACE AT THE END OF CHAUCER'S TALE OF  
"THE FLOURE AND THE LEFE."

THIS pleasant tale is like a little copse:  
 The honied lines so freshly interlace  
 To keep the reader in so sweet a place,  
 So that he here and there full-hearted stops;  
 And oftentimes he feels the dewy drops  
 Come cool and suddenly against his face,  
 And by the wandering melody may trace  
 Which way the tender-legged linnet hops.  
 Oh! what a power has white Simplicity!  
 What mighty power has this gentle story!  
 I that do even feel a thirst for glory,  
 Could at this moment be content to lie  
 Meekly upon the grass, as those whose sobbings  
 Were heard of none beside the mournful robins.

---

This sonnet was published in *The Examiner* for the 16th of March 1817, having

TWO SONNETS.

I.

TO HAYDON, WITH A SONNET WRITTEN ON SEEING THE ELGIN  
MARBLES.

HAYDON! forgive me that I cannot speak  
Definitively on these mighty things;  
Forgive me that I have not Eagle's wings —  
That what I want I know not where to seek:  
And think that I would not be over meek  
In rolling out upfollow'd thunderings,  
Even to the steep of Heliconian springs,  
Were I of ample strength for such a freak —  
Think too, that all those numbers should be thine;  
Whose else? In this who touch thy vesture's hem?  
For when men star'd at what was most divine  
With browless idiotism — o'erwise phlegm —  
Thou hadst beheld the Hesperean shine  
Of their star in the East, and gone to worship them.

II.

ON SEEING THE ELGIN MARBLES.

MY spirit is too weak — mortality  
Weighs heavily on me like unwilling sleep,  
And each imagin'd pinnacle and steep  
Of godlike hardship, tells me I must die  
Like a sick Eagle looking at the sky.  
Yet 'tis a gentle luxury to weep  
That I have not the cloudy winds to keep,  
Fresh for the opening of the morning's eye.

---

In regard to this subject it will be remembered that Haydon had been most energetic in preaching the gospel of the Elgin Marbles, and that his friends claimed for him the distinction of being the first to apply to modern art the "principles" of those immortal works. These two sonnets appeared in *The Examiner* for the 9th of March 1817, signed "J. K.;" but this did not prevent Mr. James Elmes from letting them do duty for "Original Poetry" in his *Annals of the Fine Arts*, where they re-appeared in No. 8 (that, seemingly, for April 1818), with the full signature "John Keats." A comparison of the two versions leads me to the supposition that the *Annals* merely reprinted "copy" cut from *The Examiner*, with slight typographical laxity: I do not trace two manuscripts. Lord Houghton transposes the two sonnets, and alters the headings accordingly, reading *indescribable* for *unde*

Such dim-conceived glories of the brain  
 Bring round the heart an undescribable feud ;  
 So do these wonders a most dizzy pain,  
 That mingles Grecian grandeur with the rude  
 Wasting of old Time — with a billowy main —  
 A sun — a shadow of a magnitude.

SONNET.\*

ON A PICTURE OF LEANDER.

COME hither all sweet maidens soberly,  
 Down-looking aye, and with a chasten'd light,  
 Hid in the fringes of your eyelids white,  
 And meekly let your fair hands joined be,  
 As if so gentle that ye could not see,  
 Untouch'd, a victim of your beauty bright,  
 Sinking away to his young spirit's night, —  
 Sinking bewilder'd 'mid the dreary sea :  
 'Tis young Leander toiling to his death ;  
 Nigh swooning, he doth purse his weary lips  
 For Hero's cheek — and smiles against her smile.

TO ———.\*

1.

THINK not of it, sweet one, so; —  
 Give it not a tear;  
 Sigh thou mayst, and bid it go  
 Any, any where.

2.

Do not look so sad, sweet one,—  
 Sad and fadingly;  
 Shed one drop, then it is gone,  
 O 'twas born to die.

3.

Still so pale? then dearest weep;  
 Weep, I'll count the tears,  
 And each one shall be a bliss  
 For thee in after years.

---

and obtains an engraving of Hero and Leander to insert with it: when the engraving comes, it turns out to represent — not the death of Leander, but his successful landing and reception by Hero, with Cupid fluttering above, torch in hand, and Hero's attendant on the stone staircase leading up to the Sestian Temple. The editor cannot sacrifice one of his principal gems by casting out the sonnet: the publishers cannot sacrifice their costly steel plate; but fortunately the editor can write to any text or any plate; and the result is "Why, Lover, why," facing "Hero and Leander" painted by H. Howard, R.A., and engraved by F. Engleheart, — verses and print corresponding in every detail, — except of course that the print is meant for serious and the verses are not. Save for some such explanation, we could hardly acquit Hood of the imputation of making fun of Keats's sonnet.

\* Given by Lord Houghton among the Literary Remains in Volume II of the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848), with the date 1817. Hitherto this poem has been headed "On . . ."; but it is so distinctly an address that *To* seems to be the right preposition. It is not stated to whom the verses are addressed. In Woodhouse's interleaved copy of *Endymion* is a transcript evidently made from a working draft. Woodhouse has copied in his careful and minute way the whole manuscript with its erasures, the first of which is a cancelled opening quatrain: —

Think not of it gentle sweet  
 It is not worth a tear  
 Will thine heart less warmly beat  
 Thy voice less clear?

Stanza 2 appears to have been originally written with the two final lines,  
 Shed one drop then only one  
 Sweetly did it die,

4.

Brighter has it left thine eyes  
Than a sunny rill;  
And thy whispering melodies  
Are tenderer still.

5.

Yet — as all things mourn awhile  
At fleeting blisses;  
E'en let us too; but be our dirge  
A dirge of kisses.

LINES.\*

1.

UNFELT, unheard, unseen,  
I've left my little queen,  
Her languid arms in silver slumber lying:  
Ah! through their nestling touch,

## 2.

Those faery lids how sleek !  
 Those lips how moist ! — they speak,  
 In ripest quiet, shadows of sweet sounds :  
 Into my fancy's ear  
 Melting a burden dear,  
 How Love doth know no fullness nor no bounds.

## 3.

True ! — tender monitors !  
 I bend unto your laws :  
 This sweetest day for dalliance was born !  
 So, without more ado,  
 I'll feel my heaven anew,  
 For all the blushing of the hasty morn.

## SONNET.\*

## ON THE SEA.

IT keeps eternal whisperings around  
 Desolate shores, and with its mighty swell  
 Gluts twice ten thousand caverns, till the spell  
 Of Hecate leaves them their old shadowy sound.  
 Often 'tis in such gentle temper found,  
 That scarcely will the very smallest shell  
 Be mov'd for days from whence it sometime fell,  
 When last the winds of heaven were unbound.  
 Oh ye ! who have your eye-balls vex'd and tir'd,  
 Feast them upon the wideness of the Sea ;  
 Oh ye ! whose ears are dinn'd with uproar rude,  
 Or fed too much with cloying melody, —  
 Sit ye near some old cavern's mouth, and brood  
 Until ye start, as if the sea-nymphs quir'd !

In the Aldine edition it was corrected by the substitution of *nor* for *and*. From the manuscript it would not appear that Keats was responsible for misquoting Shakespeare.

\* First given among the Literary Remains in Volume II of the *Life, Letters &c* (1848), and dated August 1817.



SONNET.\*

ON LEIGH HUNT'S POEM "THE STORY OF RIMINI."

WHO loves to peer up at the morning sun,  
    With half-shut eyes and comfortable cheek,  
    Let him, with this sweet tale, full often seek  
For meadows where the little rivers run;  
Who loves to linger with that brightest one  
    Of Heaven — Hesperus — let him lowly speak  
    These numbers to the night, and starlight meek,  
Or moon, if that her hunting be begun.  
He who knows these delights, and too is prone  
    To moralize upon a smile or tear,  
Will find at once a region of his own,  
    A bower for his spirit, and will steer  
To alleys where the fir-tree drops its cone,  
    Where robins hop, and fallen leaves are sear.

FRAGMENT: MODERN LOVE.\*

**A**ND what is love? It is a doll dress'd up  
 For idleness to cosset, nurse, and dandle;  
 A thing of soft misnomers, so divine  
 That silly youth doth think to make itself  
 Divine by loving, and so goes on 5  
 Yawning and doting a whole summer long,  
 Till Miss's comb is made a pearl tiara,  
 And common Wellingtons turn Romeo boots;  
 Then Cleopatra lives at number seven,  
 And Antony resides in Brunswick Square. 10  
 Fools! if some passions high have warm'd the world,  
 If Queens and Soldiers have play'd deep for hearts,  
 It is no reason why such agonies  
 Should be more common than the growth of weeds.  
 Fools! make me whole again that weighty pearl 15  
 The Queen of Egypt melted, and I'll say  
 That ye may love in spite of beaver hats.

FRAGMENT OF "THE CASTLE BUILDER." †

\* \* \* \* \*

**T**O-NIGHT I'll have my friar — let me think  
 About my room, — I'll have it in the pink;  
 It should be rich and sombre, and the moon,  
 Just in its mid-life in the midst of June,  
 Should look thro' four large windows and display 5  
 Clear, but for gold-fish vases in the way,  
 Their glassy diamonding on Turkish floor;  
 The tapers keep aside, an hour and more,  
 To see what else the moon alone can show;  
 While the night-breeze doth softly let us know 10  
 My terrace is well bower'd with oranges.  
 Upon the floor the dullest spirit sees

\* *Modern Love* follows "Where's the Poet?" in the group of undated fragments at the end of Volume I of the *Life, Letters &c.*

† This follows the preceding fragment in the first volume of the *Life, Letters &c.*

A guitar-ribband and a lady's glove Beside a crumple-leaved tale of love; A tambour-frame, with Venus sleeping there, All finish'd but some ringlets of her hair; A viol, bow-strings torn, cross-wise upon A glorious folio of Anacreon; A skull upon a mat of roses lying,	15
Ink'd purple with a song concerning dying; An hour-glass on the turn, amid the trails Of passion-flower; — just in time there sails A cloud across the moon, — the lights bring in! And see what more my phantasy can win.	20
It is a gorgeous room, but somewhat sad; The draperies are so, as tho' they had Been made for Cleopatra's winding-sheet; And opposite the stedfast eye doth meet A spacious looking-glass, upon whose face, In letters raven-sombre, you may trace Old "Mene, Mene, Tekel Upharsin." Greek busts and statuary have ever been Held, by the finest spirits, fitter far Than vase grotesque and Siamesian jar; Therefore 'tis sure a want of Attic taste	25
	30
	35

FRAGMENT.

“ Under the flag  
Of each his faction, they to battle bring  
Their embryo atoms.” — MILTON.

WELCOME joy, and welcome sorrow,  
 Lethe's weed and Hermes' feather ;  
 Come to-day, and come to-morrow,  
 I do love you both together !  
 I love to mark sad faces in fair weather ;  
 5 And hear a merry laugh amid the thunder ;  
 Fair and foul I love together.  
 Meadows sweet where flames are under,  
 And a giggle at a wonder ;  
 10 Visage sage at pantomime ;  
 Funeral, and steeple-chime ;  
 Infant playing with a skull ;  
 Morning fair, and shipwreck'd hull ;  
 Nightshade with the woodbine kissing ;  
 15 Serpents in red roses hissing ;  
 Cleopatra regal-dress'd  
 With the aspic at her breast ;  
 Dancing music, music sad,  
 Both together, sane and mad ;  
 20 Muses bright and muses pale ;  
 Sombre Saturn, Momus hale ; —  
 Laugh and sigh, and laugh again ;  
 Oh the sweetness of the pain !  
 Muses bright, and muses pale,  
 25 Bare your faces of the veil ;  
 Let me see ; and let me write  
 Of the day, and of the night —  
 Both together : — let me slake  
 All my thirst for sweet heart-ache !  
 30 Let my bower be of yew,  
 Interwreath'd with myrtles new ;  
 Pines and lime-trees full in bloom,  
 And my couch a low grass-tomb.

---

This is the fourth of the undated fragments at the end of Volume I of the *Life*.

## SONNET.\*

WHEN I have fears that I may cease to be  
Before my pen has glean'd my teeming brain,  
Before high piled books, in charactry,  
Hold like rich garners the full ripen'd grain;  
When I behold, upon the night's starr'd face,  
Huge cloudy symbols of a high romance,  
And think that I may never live to trace  
Their shadows, with the magic hand of chance;  
And when I feel, fair creature of an hour,  
That I shall never look upon thee more,  
Never have relish in the faery power  
Of unreflecting love; — then on the shore  
Of the wide world I stand alone, and think  
Till love and fame to nothingness do sink. .

## SONNET TO HOMER.†

Aye on the shores of darkness there is light,  
 And precipices show untrodden green,  
 There is a budding morrow in midnight,  
 There is a triple sight in blindness keen;  
 Such seeing hadst thou, as it once befel  
 To Dian, Queen of Earth, and Heaven, and Hell.

A DRAUGHT OF SUNSHINE.\*

HENCE Burgundy, Claret, and Port,  
 Away with old Hock and Madeira,  
 Too earthly ye are for my sport;  
 There's a beverage brighter and clearer.  
 Instead of a pitiful rummer, 5  
 My wine overbrims a whole summer;  
 My bowl is the sky,  
 And I drink at my eye,  
 Till I feel in the brain  
 A Delphian pain — 10  
 Then follow, my Caius! then follow:  
 On the green of the hill  
 We will drink our fill

---

must have preceded that of 1816, and received with considerable reserve the evidence as to the date which I communicated to him in the course of our correspondence. It will be of interest to many lovers both of Keats and of Rossetti to learn that the later poet whom we have but lately lost considered this sonnet to contain Keats's finest single line of poetry —

There is a budding morrow in midnight,

a line which Rossetti told me he thought one of the finest "in all poetry." No one will dispute that it is a most astonishing line, more particularly for a young man of Keats's years in 1818. The text given above is that of Sir Charles Dilke's manuscript, in which, however, the word *spummy* in line 7 is altered to *spermy* in what seems to me to be the handwriting of Mr. Dilke, the grandfather of the present Baronet.

\* These lines are part of an extract from a letter to Reynolds dated "Hampstead, Jan. 31st, 1818," published in Volume I of the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848), but omitted from the *Life and Letters* of 1867 as "a page of doggerel not worth transcription." The time has now come when students will feel entitled to have even Keats's doggerel, some of which, by the bye, has far less reason (and rhyme too) than the present effusion — to my mind rather a bright and happy specimen, notwithstanding Keats's own plea to his correspondent, "you must forgive all this ranting; but the fact is, I cannot write sense this morning." With the view of giving Reynolds "some sense" nevertheless, he proceeds to copy out his latest sonnet, "When I have fears" &c. To the present fragment I have ventured to add a very obvious title.

3      *POSTHUMOUS AND FUGITIVE POEMS.*

Of golden sunshine, Till our brains intertwine	15
With the glory and grace of Apollo! God of the Meridian, And of the East and West, To thee my soul is flown,	
And my body is earthward press'd. —	20
It is an awful mission, A terrible division; And leaves a gulph austere To be fill'd with worldly fear.	
Aye, when the soul is fled	25
To high above our head, Affrighted do we gaze After its airy maze, As doth a mother wild, When her young infant child	
Is in an eagle's claws —	30
And is not this the cause Of madness? — God of Song, Thou bearest me along Through sights I scarce can bear:	
O let me, let me share	35

For I was taught in Paradise  
To ease my breast of melodies —  
Shed no tear.

Overhead — look overhead  
'Mong the blossoms white and red — 10  
Look up, look up — I flutter now  
On this flush pomegranate bough —  
See me — 'tis this silvery bill  
Ever cures the good man's ill —  
Shed no tear — O shed no tear! 15  
The flower will bloom another year.  
Adieu — Adieu — I fly, adieu,  
I vanish in the heaven's blue —  
Adieu, Adieu!

II.

Ah! woe is me! poor silver-wing!  
That I must chant thy lady's dirge,  
And death to this fair haunt of spring,  
Of melody, and streams of flowery verge, —  
Poor silver-wing! ah! woe is me! 5  
That I must see  
These blossoms snow upon thy lady's pall!  
Go, pretty page! and in her ear  
Whisper that the hour is near!  
Softly tell her not to fear 10  
Such calm favonian burial!  
Go, pretty page! and soothly tell, —  
The blossoms hang by a melting spell,  
And fall they must, ere a star wink thrice  
Upon her closed eyes, 15  
That now in vain are weeping their last tears,  
At sweet life leaving, and these arbours green, —  
Rich dowry from the Spirit of the Spheres, —  
Alas! poor Queen!

---

volume by way of frontispiece. The variations shown by the manuscript according to this reproduction are mainly in minute details; and I have adopted many of them as characteristic — not, however, the curious orthography *Paradise* in line 6, or *bow* for *bough* in line 12.



SONG.

ITTEN ON A BLANK PAGE IN BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER'S  
WORKS, BETWEEN "CUPID'S REVENGE" AND "THE TWO NOBLE  
KINSMEN."

I.

**S**PIRIT here that reignest !  
Spirit here that painest !  
Spirit here that burnest !  
Spirit here that mournest !  
Spirit, I bow  
My forehead low,  
Enshaded with thy pinions.  
Spirit, I look  
All passion-struck  
Into thy pale dominions.

2.

Spirit here that laughest !

## STANZAS.

## 1.

IN a drear-nighted December,  
 Too happy, happy tree,  
 Thy branches ne'er remember  
 Their green felicity:  
 The north cannot undo them,  
 With a sleety whistle through them;  
 Nor frozen thawings glue them  
 From budding at the prime.

## 2.

In a drear-nighted December,  
 Too happy, happy brook,  
 Thy bubblings ne'er remember  
 Apollo's summer look;  
 But with a sweet forgetting,  
 They stay their crystal fretting,  
 Never, never petting  
 About the frozen time

## 3.

Ah! would 'twere so with many  
 A gentle girl and boy!  
 But were there ever any  
 Writh'd not at passed joy?  
 To know the change and feel it,  
 When there is none to heal it,  
 Nor numbed sense to steal it.  
 Was never said in rhyme.

---

I have not succeeded in tracing this poem further back than to Galignani's edition of Shelley, Keats, and Coleridge (1829). In 1830 it appeared in *The Gem, a Literary Annual*. Some years ago a correspondent sent me for inspection a manuscript varying slightly from the received text: thus, each stanza began with *In drear nighted December*; the second *happy* in line 2 of stanza 1 appeared to be an afterthought; in stanza 3, line 2, *happy* stood cancelled in favour of *gentle*, and line 5 was

The feel of not to feel it.

In *The Gem* we read *told* for *said* in the last line.

## SONNET.

## THE HUMAN SEASONS.

**F**OUR Seasons fill the measure of the year;  
 There are four seasons in the mind of man:  
 He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear  
 Takes in all beauty with an easy span:  
 He has his Summer, when luxuriously  
 Spring's honied cud of youthful thought he loves  
 To ruminatè, and by such dreaming night  
 His nearest unto heaven: quiet coves  
 His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings  
 He furlèth close; contented so to look  
 On mists in idleness — to let fair things  
 Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook.  
 He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,  
 Or else he would forego his mortal nature.

---

This sonnet and that to Ailsa Rock were first published, with the signature "L,"  
 Leigh Hunt's *Literary Pocket-Book; or, Companion for the Lover of Nature and*  
*the first number that has since in which Chalmers' *Manuscript* appeared.*

## LINES

## ON SEEING A LOCK OF MILTON'S HAIR.

CHIEF of organic numbers!  
 Old Scholar of the Spheres!  
 Thy spirit never slumbers,  
 But rolls about our ears,  
 For ever, and for ever! 5  
 O what a mad endeavour  
 Worketh he,  
 Who to thy sacred and ennobled hearse  
 Would offer a burnt sacrifice of verse  
 And melody. 10

How heavenward thou soundest,  
 Live Temple of sweet noise,  
 And Discord unconfoundest,  
 Giving Delight new joys,  
 And Pleasure nobler pinions! 15  
 O, where are thy dominions?  
 Lend thine ear  
 To a young Delian oath, — aye, by thy soul,  
 By all that from thy mortal lips did roll,  
 And by the kernel of thine earthly love, 20  
 Beauty, in things on earth, and things above,  
 I swear!

---

In a letter to his friend Bailey, dated the 23rd of January 1818 (*Life, Letters &c.*, 1848), Keats says — "I was at Hunt's the other day, and he surprised me with a real authenticated lock of Milton's hair. I know you would like what I wrote thereon, so here it is — as they say of a Sheep in a Nursery Book." And after transcribing the poem he adds — "This I did at Hunt's, at his request. Perhaps I should have done something better alone and at home." In the folio Shakespeare in Sir Charles Dilke's possession these Lines are written in Keats's autograph, and there is another manuscript at the end of the copy of *Endymion* mentioned several times in these notes. The date given by Keats to the poem is the 21st of January 1818. I presume Lord Houghton gave the poem from the Bailey letter: the variations are inconsiderable. Medwin records in his *Life of Shelley* (Volume II, page 106) the belief that this poem had appeared in a periodical, though not at that time included in Keats's works. I have not come upon the poem in periodical literature; but Medwin may be right. For Leigh Hunt's sonnets on this subject, see Appendix.

(20) Lord Houghton reads *thy* for *thine*.

(22) This line, though in Lord Houghton's editions, is not in either of Sir Charles Dilke's manuscripts.



The bitter-sweet of this Shakespearian fruit :  
 Chief Poet ! and ye clouds of Albion,  
     Begetters of our deep eternal theme !  
 When through the old oak Forest I am gone  
     Let me not wander in a barren dream,  
 But, when I am consumed in the fire, ,  
 Give me new Phœnix wings to fly at my desire.

## SONNET TO THE NILE.\*

SON of the old moon-mountains African !  
 Chief of the Pyramid and Crocodile !  
     We call thee fruitful, and, that very while,  
 A desert fills our seeing's inward span ;  
 Nurse of swart nations since the world began,  
     Art thou so fruitful? or dost thou beguile  
     Such men to honour thee, who, worn with toil,

second manuscript in Sir Charles Dilke's copy of *Endymion*. A third may perhaps be presumed to be in America, as Keats, writing to his brothers on the 23rd of January 1818, transcribed the sonnet for them with the following remarks :—

" I think a little change has taken place in my intellect lately ; I cannot bear to be uninterested or unemployed, I, who for so long a time have been addicted to passiveness. Nothing is finer for the purposes of great productions than a very gradual ripening of the intellectual powers. As an instance of this—observe—I sat down yesterday to read ' King Lear ' once again : the thing appeared to demand the prologue of a sonnet. I wrote it, and began to read. ( I know you would like to see it. )"

A copy of the sonnet follows, and then the words, " So you see I am getting at it with a sort of determination and strength,..." So far as I have ascertained, the first appearance of the sonnet was with this letter, in the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848), Volume I, pages 96 and 97 ; but Medwin, in his *Life of Shelley* (1847, Volume II, page 106) records the belief that the sonnet had already appeared in a periodical. Lord Houghton gave the title as above in 1848 ; and so it stands in both the manuscripts I have seen ; but in the Aldine edition of 1876 it is *Written before re-reading King Lear*. There are several points in which the manuscripts vary from the text as previously printed ; and the new readings adopted above are from these manuscripts. The first variation to note is in line 2, where previous versions stand thus—

Fair plumed Syren ! Queen ! if far away !

Lord Houghton also reads *volume* for *pages* in line 4, *Hell torment* for *damnation* in line 6, drops the word *humbly* from line 7, and the hyphen between *bitter* and *sweet* in line 8, and gives line 11 thus—

When I am through the old oak forest gone—

reading also *with* for *in* in line 13. In one of the manuscripts *this* is cancelled in favour of *our* in line 10.

\* This sonnet seems to have been composed on the 4th of February 1818 ; for in writing to his brothers (*Life, Letters &c.*, 1848, Volume I, page 98) on the 16th of

Rest for a space 'twixt Cairo and Decan?  
 O may dark fancies err! they surely do;  
 'Tis ignorance that makes a barren waste  
 Of all beyond itself, thou dost bedew  
     Green rushes like our rivers, and dost taste  
 The pleasant sun-rise, green isles hast thou too,  
     And to the sea as happily dost haste.

WHAT THE THRUSH SAID.\*

LINES FROM A LETTER TO JOHN HAMILTON REYNOLDS.

O THOU whose face hath felt the Winter's wind,  
     Whose eye has seen the snow-clouds hung in mist,  
     And the black elm tops 'mong the freezing stars,  
     To thee the spring will be a harvest-time.  
 O thou, whose only book has been the light  
 Of supreme darkness which thou feddest on  
 Night after night when Phœbus was away,  
     To thee the Spring shall be a triple morn.

that month, a Monday, Keats says — "The Wednesday before last, Shelley, Hunt, and I, wrote each a sonnet on the river Nile: some day you shall read them all." Lord Houghton appended Keats's sonnet to the letter, together with Leigh Hunt's, and Shelley's *Ozymandias*. The Nile sonnet of Shelley, discovered within the last few years, will be found with Hunt's in the Appendix. Of Keats's there is a fair copy among those written in Sir Charles Dilke's copy of *Endymion*. From this manuscript there are three verbal variations in Lord Houghton's editions, *Stream* for *Chief* in line 2, *Those* for *Such* in line 7, and *them* for *for* in line 8; and the punctuation of the sestet is different — more correct grammatically, but less rapid metrically, and I think less characteristic.

\* In an undated letter to Reynolds bearing the postmark "Hampstead, Feb. 19, 1818" (*Life, Letters &c.*, 1848, Volume I, page 87), occurs the passage — "I was led into these thoughts, my dear Reynolds, by the beauty of the morning operating on a sense of idleness. I have not read any books — the morning said I was right — I had no idea but of the morning, and the thrush said I was right, seeming to say," — and these fourteen lines of blank verse follow immediately on the word *say*, so that the title I have ventured to give the lines accords at all events with the facts. Keats seems to have been really writing in a kind of spiritual parallelism with the thrush's song: it will be noted that line 5 repeats the form of line 1, line 8 of line 4, while lines 11 and 12 are a still closer repetition of lines 9 and 10; so that the poem follows in a sense the thrush's method of repetition. A later poet, perhaps a closer and more conscious observer than Keats, namely Robert Browning, says of the same bird in his *Home-Thoughts from Abroad* —

That's the wise thrush; he sings each song twice over  
 Lest you should think he never could recapture  
 The first fine careless rapture!

Having seen the original letter to Reynolds, I have collated the text of Keats's lines with the manuscript, wherein they are not indented as above. The arrangement

O fret not after knowledge — I have none,  
 And yet my song comes native with the warmth.  
 O fret not after knowledge — I have none,  
 And yet the Evening listens. He who saddens  
 At thought of idleness cannot be idle,  
 And he's awake who thinks himself asleep.

## SONNET.\*

Written in answer to a Sonnet ending thus : —

Dark eyes are dearer far  
 Than those that mock the hyacinthine bell —

BY J. H. REYNOLDS.

BLUE ! 'Tis the life of heaven, — the domain  
 Of Cynthia, — the wide palace of the sun, —  
 The tent of Hesperus, and all his train, —  
 The bosomer of clouds, gold, grey and dun.  
 Blue ! 'Tis the life of waters : — Ocean  
 And all its vassal streams, pools numberless,  
 May rage, and foam, and fret, but never can  
 Subside, if not to dark blue nativeness.  
 Blue ! Gentle cousin of the forest-green,  
 Married to green in all the sweetest flowers, —

has been adopted in order to emphasize the repetitions, and to suggest the form of the sonnet. Having regard to the varieties of sonnet metre used by Keats, his bold boyish attempt (Volume I, page 49) at emancipation in making five syllables without a rhyme serve as a full line, and his sonnet protest further on in the present volume against chaining our English "by dull rhymes," I think it hardly fantastic to suppose that he consciously translated the wild melody of the thrush into an unrhymed sonnet-structure.

\* The sonnet of John Hamilton Reynolds to which this is a reply appeared in 1821 in *The Garden of Florence* &c., and will be found in the Appendix. From a letter signed "A. J. Horwood" which was published in *The Athenæum* of the 3rd of June 1876, it would seem that this poem, like many others, must have been written out more than once by Keats; for, in a copy of *The Garden of Florence* mentioned in that letter, Keats's sonnet is transcribed, seemingly, from a different manuscript from that used by Lord Houghton when he gave the sonnet in the *Life, Letters, and Literary Remains* (Volume II, page 295) in 1848. The transcript quoted in *The Athenæum* reads *hue* for *life* in line 1, and *bright* for *wide* in line 2, and gives line 6 thus —

With all his tributary streams, pools numberless,  
 a foot too long: it also reads *to* for *of* in line 9. These strike me as decidedly genuine variations, but indicative of an earlier state of the poem than that adopted in the text. The punctuation of *The Athenæum* version is characteristic of Keats, and I have adopted it in part. Lord Houghton dates the sonnet February 1818.



Forget-me-not, — the Blue bell, — and, that Queen  
Of secrecy, the Violet : what strange powers  
Hast thou, as a mere shadow ! But how great,  
When in an Eye thou art, alive with fate !

## SONNET TO JOHN HAMILTON REYNOLDS.\*

O THAT a week could be an age, and we  
Felt parting and warm meeting every week,  
Then one poor year a thousand years would be,  
The flush of welcome ever on the cheek :  
So could we live long life in little space,  
So time itself would be annihilate.  
So a day's journey in oblivious haze  
To serve our joys would lengthen and dilate.  
O to arrive each Monday morn from Ind !  
To land each Tuesday from the rich Levant !  
In little time a host of joys to bind,  
And keep our souls in one eternal pant !  
This morn, my friend, and yester-evening taught  
Me how to harbour such a happy thought.

## TEIGNMOUTH : †

“SOME DOGGEREL,” SENT IN A LETTER TO B. R. HAYDON.

## I.

HERE all the summer could I stay,  
For there's Bishop's teign  
And King's teign  
And Coomb at the clear teign head —  
Where close by the stream  
You may have your cream  
All spread upon barley bread.

\* First given among the *Literary Remains* — the *Life Letters* &c. (1848), not dated, but standing next to the sonnet on *Worcestershire*, which is dated February 1818.

† Keats's correspondence for the Spring of 1818 shows that on his arrival in Devonshire he had on his hands, besides a quantity of his sick brother's, the final work connected with the publication of *Hyperion*. At the end of the first ten days he writes to Haydon of having copied the fourth book for the press; and between the

2.

There's arch Brook  
 And there's larch Brook  
 Both turning many a mill ;  
 And cooling the drouth  
 Of the salmon's mouth,  
 And fattening his silver gill.

3.

There is Wild wood,  
 A Mild hood  
 To the sheep on the lea o' the down,  
 Where the golden furze,  
 With its green, thin spurs,  
 Doth catch at the maiden's gown.

4.

There is Newton marsh  
 With its spear grass harsh —  
 A pleasant summer level  
 Where the maidens sweet  
 Of the Market Street,  
 Do meet in the dusk to revel.

---

completion of that operation and the end of April, when the poem was out, he must have been more or less busy with it. Probably also the greater part of *Isabella* was composed at Teignmouth, seeing that it was from that place that he wrote of it to Reynolds towards the end of his stay, as about to be copied out. These circumstances would account for the limited extent of the series of poems special to Devonshire. These, although inferior in interest to the Scottish series of the Summer of 1818, are full of the individuality of Keats. The first piece we may safely assign to the 14th of March 1818. It occurs in a letter to Haydon published by Mr. Tom Taylor in Haydon's Autobiography without any date beyond "Teignmouth, Saturday morning;" but the verses form, with the next song, the staple of the letter, and appear from the context to have been written off as a part of it, and not copied into it. The date of the letter is to be fixed thus: Keats says in the prose paragraph of which the verses are the continuation — "The six first days I was here it did nothing but rain; and at that time, having to write to a friend, I gave Devonshire a good blowing-up. It has been fine for almost three days, and I was coming round a bit, but to-day it rains again. With me the county is on its good behaviour. I have enjoyed the most delightful walks these three fine days, beautiful enough to make me content." Now on the 25th of March Keats wrote to Reynolds of the weather as if the county's trial had lasted three weeks: this gives the 4th as the day of his arrival; and the tenth day from that (when he was writing to Haydon) would be the 14th, which was a Saturday. Keats describes these verses as "some doggrel." If he had gathered all their local details in the three fine days, he had not

## 5.

There's the Barton rich  
 With dyke and ditch  
 And hedge for the thrush to live in  
 And the hollow tree  
 For the buzzing bee  
 And a bank for the wasp to hive in.

## 6.

And O, and O  
 The daisies blow  
 And the primroses are waken'd,  
 And the violets white  
 Sit in silver plight,  
 And the green bud's as long as the spike end.

## 7.

Then who would go  
 Into dark Soho,  
 And chatter with dack'd hair'd critics,  
 When he can stay  
 For the new-mown hay,  
 And startle the dappled Prickets?

---

been idle; for he had been exploring both sides of the Estuary of the Teign. Starting from Teignmouth along the right-hand bank he would come to Bishop's Teignton about three miles distant, and King's Teignton or Teignton Regis about five miles distant; and crossing the ferry at Teignmouth to get to the left-hand bank he would go through Shaldon and Ringmore to get to the village of Coomb-in-Teign-Head—perhaps three or four miles from his lodgings. He could not have had his cream and barley bread close to the stream in the village proper; but twenty or thirty years later, and onwards, there was certainly every accommodation of that kind in a group of curious old cottages perched up over the mud-banks, and known as Coomb Cellars—a favourite place for pic-nics, not so celebrated for cream as for cockles, raked out of the mud bottom of the Estuary at low tide. There were two brooks in and near Teignmouth—one in Brimley Vale and the other in Coomb Vale (nothing to do with Coomb-in-Teign-Head on the Shaldon bank); but I never heard these called Arch Brook and Larch Brook. The "Wild word" of stanza 3 answers to any of the thick plantations of Little Haldon on the Exeter road,—a down such as Keats describes—furze and all. Newton Abbott or Newton Bushel, about six miles from Teignmouth, lies in a marshy situation enough, though the name of "the Marsh" has been appropriated to a spot near the Railway station. The town still has, like most country towns of any consequence, a Market Street. Of the dykes, ditches &c. of "the Barton" I can give no account, as I do not know to what particular manor-house and demesne the term was ever applied at Teignmouth. There is a touch of "local colour" in the white

## THE DEVON MAID.\*

STANZAS SENT IN A LETTER TO B. R. HAYDON.

1.

WHERE be ye going, you Devon Maid?  
 And what have ye there in the Basket?  
 Ye tight little fairy just fresh from the dairy,  
 Will ye give me some cream if I ask it?

2.

I love your Meads, and I love your flowers,  
 And I love your junkets mainly,  
 But 'hind the door I love kissing more,  
 O look not so disdainly.

3.

I love your hills, and I love your dales,  
 And I love your flocks a-bleating —

---

violets of stanza 6; for though primroses and violets are found in almost all parts of the country, white violets are not quite common about Teignmouth, but are to be found at Bishop's Teignton. It is a pity that this choice little bit of trifling should be disfigured by the false rhyme *critics* and *Prickets*. Keats does not seem to have been quite certain when he despatched his letter whether his "doggerel" had been written seriously or not; for he resumes prose with — "I know not if this rhyming fit has done anything; it will be safe with you, if worthy to put among my Lyrics." We must consider these trifles worthy to go among his lyrics, in virtue of their fine sense of rhythm and their keen relish for out of door life. It is clearly to the present poem, and not to the Epistle to Reynolds, that the title *Teignmouth* belongs of right; and I have therefore headed it accordingly. The text has been very copiously amended from the original letter quite clearly written; and I need not detain the reader with the details of the absurd perversion of it by Mr. Taylor. But I must mention that "Barton" as a place-name instead of "the Barton" was suspicious on the face of it, as there is no such place there; that the critics are clearly described, not as *dark-hair'd* or as *dank-hair'd*, but as *dack'd hair'd* (=shock-headed); and that the dappled creatures are certainly not *crickets* but *Prickets*, or two-year-old deer.

\* In the letter of Saturday the 14th of March 1818, embodying the preceding verses headed "Teignmouth," this song also occurs after a prose break consisting merely of the words which Mr. Taylor printed as — "There's a bit of doggerel; you would like a bit of botheral." What Keats wrote was no such nonsense, but "Here's some doggerel for you — Perhaps you would like a bit of B—hrell" — which is more witty than elegant, and need scarcely be translated. The first line of the song is not of the most authentic Devonian diction, though *have ye* and *Will ye* are, essentially; but these forms are always pronounced by the indigenous Devon maid *have 'e* and *will 'e*. *Ye* in the first and third lines is bad Devonian: it should be

But O, on the heather to lie together,  
With both our hearts a-beating!

4.

I'll put your Basket all safe in a nook,  
Your shawl I hang up on the willow,  
And we will sigh in the daisy's eye  
And kiss on a grass green pillow.

#### EPISTLE TO JOHN HAMILTON REYNOLDS.\*

DEAR Reynolds! as last night I lay in bed,  
There came before my eyes that wanted thread  
Of shapes, and shadows, and remembrances,  
That every other minute vex and please:  
Things all disjointed come from north and south, — 5  
Two Witch's eyes above a Cherub's mouth,  
Voltaire with casque and shield and habergeon,  
And Alexander with his nightcap on;

*You*; but as *u* in Devonshire is pronounced as in *tu* (French) or *übel* (German) Keats may at first have taken *You* for *Ye*: indeed, in a letter to his brother Tom written from Dumfries in July 1818 he says — "In Devonshire they say, 'Well, where be ye going?'" — an inaccuracy leading almost certainly to this conclusion. The late Dante Gabriel Rossetti pointed out in one of his letters to me that the first verse "is undoubtedly a reminiscence from one of the songs in *Aella* beginning

'As Eleanor by the green lessell was sitting' —

which again (as shown by Editors) is a reminiscence from a passage in Tom d'Urfe's *Pills to Purge Melancholy*." The stanza of Chatterton referred to is as follows: —

Mie husbnde, Lorde Thomas, a forrester boulede,  
As ever clove pynne, or the baskette,  
Does no cherysauncys from Eynour houlde,  
I have ytte as soone as I aske ytte.

The parallelism lends a strong literary interest to Keats's little *jeu d'esprit*, seeing that within five days of the time when *The Devon Maid* (as I have ventured to call the song) was written, he was inscribing Endymion "to the memory of the most English of poets except Shakspeare, Thomas Chatterton," — a dedication, by the bye, which Rossetti was very anxious to see retained: it will be found along with the cancelled Preface (page 69). Lord Houghton omits stanza 2. The text of *The Devon Maid* has been restored, like that of *Teignmouth*, from the letter: there is no doubt about any one word: and I am at a loss to understand Mr. Taylor's changes, especially *divinely* for *disdainly*, which makes good sense and good rhyme, though a licentious form.

\* This epistle with a few lines of introduction in prose was written at Teignmouth, and is dated the 25th of March 1818 in the *Life, Letters &c.*, where it first appeared. Keats says to his friend — "In hopes of cheering you through a minute or two, I



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Old Socrates a-tying his cravat,  
And Hazlitt playing with Miss Edgeworth's cat; 10  
And Junius Brutus, pretty well so so,  
Making the best of 's way towards Soho.

Few are there who escape these visitings, —  
Perhaps one or two whose lives have patent wings,  
And thro' whose curtains peeps no hellish nose, 15  
No wild-boar tushes, and no Mermaid's toes;  
But flowers bursting out with lusty pride,  
And young Æolian harps personify'd;  
Some Titian colours touch'd into real life, —  
The sacrifice goes on; the pontiff knife 20  
Gleams in the Sun, the milk-white heifer lows,  
The pipes go shrilly, the libation flows:  
A white sail shows above the green-head cliff,  
Moves round the point, and throws her anchor stiff;  
The mariners join hymn with those on land. 25

You know the Enchanted Castle, — it doth stand  
Upon a rock, on the border of a Lake,  
Nested in trees, which all do seem to shake  
From some old magic-like Urganda's Sword.  
O Phœbus! that I had thy sacred word 30  
To show this Castle, in fair dreaming wise,  
Unto my friend, while sick and ill he lies!

You know it well enough, where it doth seem  
A mossy place, a Merlin's Hall, a dream;  
You know the clear Lake, and the little Isles, 35  
The mountains blue, and cold near neighbour rills,  
All which elsewhere are but half animate;  
There do they look alive to love and hate,

---

was determined, will he nill he, to send you some lines, so you will excuse the unconnected subject and careless verse. You know, I am sure, Claude's 'Enchanted Castle,' and I wish you may be pleased with my remembrance of it." Some thirty years ago this picture emerged from Lord Overstone's collection at Wickham Park, Bromley, and was exhibited at the British Institution. It was a favourite in Keats's circle. Hunt, in *Imagination and Fancy*, says of the "perilous seas in faery lands forlorn" passage in the *Ode to a Nightingale*, "This beats Claude's Enchanted Castle, and the story of King Beder in the Arabian Nights."

(11) The term *pretty well so so* was used by Keats's set to signify *pretty well tipsy*; and this sense is destroyed by the comma which has hitherto stood between *pretty well* and *so so*.

(14) The metre here probably implies the colloquial pronunciation *praps for perhaps*.

Then there's a little wing, far from the Sun,  
Built by a Lapland Witch turn'd maudlin Nun;  
And many other juts of aged stone  
Founded with many a mason-devil's groan,

The doors all look as if they op'd themselves,  
The windows as if latch'd by Fays and Elves,  
And from them comes a silver flash of light,  
As from the westward of a Summer's night;  
Or like a beauteous woman's large blue eyes  
Gone mad thro' olden songs and poesies.

See! what is coming from the distance dim!  
A golden Galley all in silken trim!  
Three rows of oars are lightening, moment whiles,  
Into the verd'rous bosoms of those isles;  
Towards the shade, under the Castle wall,  
It comes in silence, — now 'tis hidden all.  
The Clarion sounds, and from a Postern-gate  
An echo of sweet music doth create  
A fear in the poor Herdsman, who doth bring  
His beasts to trouble the enchanted spring, —  
He tells of the sweet music, and the spot,  
To all his friends, and they believe him not.

O that our dreamings all, of sleep or wake,  
Would all their colours from the sunset take:  
From something of material sublime,  
Rather than shadow our own soul's day-time  
In the dark void of night. For in the world  
We iostle — but



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On the Admiral-staff, — and so philosophize  
 I dare not yet! Oh, never will the prize,  
 High reason, and the love of good and ill, 75  
 Be my award! Things cannot to the will  
 Be settled, but they tease us out of thought;  
 Or is it that imagination brought  
 Beyond its proper bound, yet still confin'd,  
 Lost in a sort of Purgatory blind, 80  
 Cannot refer to any standard law  
 Of either earth or heaven? It is a flaw  
 In happiness, to see beyond our bourn, —  
 It forces us in summer skies to mourn,  
 It spoils the singing of the Nightingale. 85

Dear Reynolds! I have a mysterious tale,  
 And cannot speak it: the first page I read  
 Upon a Lampit rock of green sea-weed  
 Among the breakers; 'twas a quiet eve,  
 The rocks were silent, the wide sea did weave 90  
 An untumultuous fringe of silver foam  
 Along the flat brown sand; I was at home  
 And should have been most happy, — but I saw  
 Too far into the sea, where every maw  
 The greater on the less feeds evermore. — 95  
 But I saw too distinct into the core  
 Of an eternal fierce destruction,  
 And so from happiness I far was gone.  
 Still am I sick of it, and tho', to-day,  
 I've gather'd young spring-leaves, and flowers gay 100  
 Of periwinkle and wild strawberry,  
 Still do I that most fierce destruction see, —  
 The Shark at savage prey, — the Hawk at pounce, —  
 The gentle Robin, like a Pard or Ounce,  
 Ravening a worm, — Away, ye horrid moods! 105  
 Moods of one's mind! You know I hate them well.  
 You know I'd sooner be a clapping Bell  
 To some Kamschatcan Missionary Church,  
 Than with these horrid moods be left i' the lurch.

(73) In the Aldine edition we read *to* for *so*.  
 (77) Rossetti also notes that this line "is anticipative of the Grecian Urn ode," —  
 Thou, silent form, dost tease us out of thought...

The same may be said of "the milk-white heifer lows," in line 21.

(90) The Aldine edition reads *weave*; but the 1848 version has *wave*.

(105) I do not know whether a line has been lost, or whether Keats is himself responsible for the want of a rhyme to this line.



## DAWLISH FAIR.\*

OVER the Hill and over the Dale,  
 And over the Bourne to Dawlish,  
 Where ginger-bread wives have a scanty sale,  
 And ginger-bread nuts are smallish.

## FRAGMENT OF AN ODE TO MAIA.†

WRITTEN ON MAY DAY 1818.

MOTHER of Hermes! and still youthful Maia!  
 May I sing to thee  
 As thou wast hymned on the shores of Baiæ?  
 Or may I woo thee  
 In earlier Sicilian? or thy smiles  
 Seek as they once were sought, in Grecian isles,  
 By bards who died content on pleasant sward,  
 Leaving great verse unto a little clan?  
 O, give me their old vigour, and unheard  
 Save of the quiet Primrose, and the span  
 Of heaven and few ears,  
 Rounded by thee, my song should die away  
 Content as theirs,  
 Rich in the simple worship of a day.

\* This scrap occurs in a letter to James Rice, written from Teignmouth on the 25th of March 1818, and published by Lord Houghton in the first volume of the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848). Keats closes his letter with "I went yesterday to Dawlish fair," and this quatrain. The hilly walk to Dawlish is recorded with topographical accuracy. Whether the rest is observation or (as is more probable) mere rhyme, I cannot say.

† First given in the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848) in a letter to Reynolds from Teignmouth, dated the 3rd of May 1818, wherein Keats says — "it is impossible to know how far knowledge will console us for the death of a friend, and the 'ills that flesh is heir to.' With respect to the affections and poetry, you must know by sympathy my thoughts that way, and I dare say these few lines will be but a ratification. I wrote them on May-day, and intend to finish the ode all in good time." Lord Houghton very aptly observes — "It is much to be regretted he did not finish this Ode; this commencement is in his best manner: the sentiment and expression perfect, as every traveller in modern Greece will recognize." An Ode so propitiously begun would, if completed, have been a worthy ending for the Devonshire series, though including what I believe I am not alone in regarding as Keats's masterpiece, — *Isabella*.

## SONG.

## I.

HUSH, hush! tread softly! hush, hush my dear!  
 All the house is asleep, but we know very well  
 That the jealous, the jealous old bald-pate may hear,  
 Tho' your padded his night-cap — O sweet Isabel!  
 Tho' your feet are more light than a Fairy's feet,  
 Who dances on bubbles where brooklets meet, —  
 Hush, hush! soft tiptoe! hush, hush my dear!  
 For less than a nothing the jealous can hear.

## 2.

No leaf doth tremble, no ripple is there  
 On the river, — all's still, and the night's sleepy eye  
 Closes up, and forgets all its Lethean care,  
 Charm'd to death by the drone of the humming May-fly;  
 And the Moon, whether prudish or complaisant,  
 Has fled to her bower, well knowing I want  
 No light in the dusk, no torch in the gloom,  
 But my Isabel's eyes, and her lips pulp'd with bloom.

## 3.

Lift the latch! ah gently! ah tenderly — sweet!  
 We are dead if that latchet gives one little clink!  
 Well done — now those lips, and a flowery seat —

---

As far as I have been able to trace this poem, it appeared for the first time in the *Life, Letters, and Literary Remains* (1848), where it is dated 1818. The statement in the Aldine edition of 1876 that it was first printed in *The Literary Pocket-book or Companion for the Lover of Nature and Art*, for 1818, must derive from some misapprehension, as there is no such book. The *Pocket-book* was started by Hunt in 1819; and in a copy of the book for that year now in Sir Charles Dilke's possession Keats wrote the Song; but it is not printed in that or in either of the four later *Pocket-books* which complete the series. For the text of the song I follow the evidently later manuscript in Sir Charles Dilke's copy of *Endymion*. The variations shown by the *Pocket-book* are, in stanza 1, line 7, *tread softly* for *soft tiptoe*; in stanza 2, line 6, *Hath* for *Has*, and line 7, *darkness* for *dusk*; in stanza 3, line 2, *chink* for *clink*, line 4, *dream* for *sleep*, line 5, *may* for *shall*, and line 6, *morning* for *morning's*. The final couplet is wanting in the later manuscript, with which Lord Houghton's version corresponds in the main. Here, however, previous texts read *his soft twin-eggs and coo*; and I am compelled to revert to the reading of the only manuscript I know of that couplet. It must be a later reading, because Keats never damages his work; and *his*, if a correct transcript from a third manuscript,

The old man may sleep, and the planets may wink;  
 The shut rose shall dream of our loves, and awake  
 Full blown, and such warmth for the morning's take,  
 The stock-dove shall hatch her soft brace and shall coo,  
 While I kiss to the melody, aching all through!

## EXTRACTS FROM AN OPERA.\*

O! WERE I one of the Olympian twelve,  
 Their godships should pass this into a law, —  
 That when a man doth set himself in toil  
 After some beauty veiled far away,  
 Each step he took should make his lady's hand  
 More soft, more white, and her fair cheek more fair;  
 And for each briar-berry he might eat,  
 A kiss should bud upon the tree of love,  
 And pulp and ripen richer every hour,  
 To melt away upon the traveller's lips.

\* \* \* \* \*

## DAISY'S SONG.

1.

The sun, with his great eye,  
 Sees not so much as I;  
 And the moon, all silver-proud,  
 Might as well be in a cloud.

2.

And O the spring — the spring!  
 I lead the life of a king!  
 Couch'd in the teeming grass,  
 I spy each pretty lass.

---

is poetically inferior to *her*, while *soft* is inapplicable to eggs — applicable to the birds substituted. With lines 5 and 6 compare, in the garden song in *Maud*,

But the rose was awake all night for your sake,...

The Laureate's sumptuous stanza can well afford the slight indebtedness.

\* First given among the Literary Remains in Volume II of the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848), and assigned to the year 1818.



3.

I look where no one dares,  
And I stare where no one stares,  
And when the night is nigh,  
Lambs bleat my lullaby.

•        •        •        •        •

FOLLY'S SONG.

When wedding fiddles are a-playing,  
    Huzza for folly O!  
And when maidens go a-Maying,  
    Huzza, &c.  
When a milk-pail is upset,  
    Huzza, &c.  
And the clothes left in the wet,  
    Huzza, &c.  
When the barrel's set abroach,  
    Huzza, &c.  
When Kate Eyebrow keeps a coach,  
    Huzza, &c.  
When the pig is over-roasted,  
    Huzza, &c.  
And the cheese is over-toasted,  
    Huzza, &c.  
When Sir Snap is with his lawyer,  
    Huzza, &c.  
And Miss Chip has kiss'd the sawyer,  
    Huzza, &c.

•        •        •        •        •

Oh, I am frighten'd with most hateful thoughts!  
Perhaps her voice is not a nightingale's,  
Perhaps her teeth are not the fairest pearl;  
Her eye-lashes may be, for aught I know,  
Not longer than the May-fly's small fan-horns;  
There may not be one dimple on her hand;  
And freckles many; ah! a careless nurse,  
In haste to teach the little thing to walk,  
May have crumpt up a pair of Dian's legs,  
And warpt the ivory of a Juno's neck.

•        •        •        •        •

He seiz'd my lady's lilly hand,  
And kiss'd it all unheard.

2.

The stranger walk'd into the hall,  
And ere he spake a word,  
He kiss'd my lady's cherry lips,  
And kiss'd 'em all unheard.

3.

The stranger walk'd into the bower, —  
But my lady first did go, —  
Aye hand in hand into the bower,  
Where my lord's roses blow.

4.

My lady's maid had a silken scarf,  
And a golden ring had she,  
And a kiss from the stranger, as off he went  
Again on his fair palfrey.

\* \* \* \* \*

Asleep! O sleep a little while, white pearl!  
And let me kneel, and let me pray to thee,  
And let me call Heaven's blessing on thine eye  
And let me breathe into the happy air,  
That doth enfold and touch the \*\*\*\*\*

## SHARING EVE'S APPLE.

1.

O BLUSH not so ! O blush not so !  
 Or I shall think you knowing ;  
 And if you smile the blushing while,  
 Then maidenheads are going.

2.

There's a blush for won't, and a blush for shan't,  
 And a blush for having done it :  
 There's a blush for thought and a blush for nought,  
 And a blush for just begun it.

3.

O sigh not so ! O sigh not so !  
 For it sounds of Eve's sweet pippin ;  
 By these loosen'd lips you have tasted the pips  
 And fought in an amorous nipping.

4.

Will you play once more at nice-cut-core,  
 For it only will last our youth out,  
 And we have the prime of the kissing time,  
 We have not one sweet tooth out.

5.

There's a sigh for yes, and a sigh for no,  
 And a sigh for I can't bear it !  
 O what can be done, shall we stay or run ?  
 O cut the sweet apple and share it !

---

This song, belonging to the year 1818, has not, I believe, been published till now. It seems to me neither more nor less worthy of Keats's reputation than the Daisy's Song in the foregoing Extracts from an Opera; but, notwithstanding the brilliant qualities of some of the stanzas, I should have hesitated to be instrumental in adding it to the poet's published works, had it not been handed about in manuscript and more than once copied.

Why should you leave me, sweet bird! why?  
You liv'd alone in the forest-tree,  
Why, pretty thing! would you not live with me?  
I kiss'd you oft and gave you white peas;  
Why not live sweetly, as in the green trees?

SONNET.†

TO A LADY SEEN FOR A FEW MOMENTS AT VAUX

**T**IME'S sea hath been five years at its slow ebb,  
Long hours have to and fro let creep the **sa**  
Since I was tangled in thy beauty's web,  
And snared by the unglowing of thine hand.  
And yet I never look on midnight sky,  
But I behold thine eyes' well memory'd light;  
I cannot look upon the rose's dye,  
But to thy cheek my soul doth take its flight.  
I cannot look on any budding flower,  
But my fond ear, in fancy at thy lips  
And harkening for a love-sound, doth devour  
Its sweets in the wrong sense: — Thou dost ecli  
Every delight with sweet remembering,  
And grief unto my darling joys dost bring.

---

This song was given in the *Life, Letters &c.*, among the *Literary*  
one II, under the date 1818,  
published in *Hood's Magazine* for April 1844, headed "Sonnet by  
S," and given by Lord Houghton in 1848 among the *Literary*  
I and headed "To ——" with a footnote to the effect of the

## ACROSTIC:

GEORGIANA AUGUSTA KEATS.

GIVE me your patience, sister, while I frame  
 Exact in capitals your golden name ;  
 Or sue the fair Apollo and he will  
 Rouse from his heavy slumber and instill  
 Great love in me for thee and Poesy. 5  
 Imagine not that greatest mastery  
 And kingdom over all the Realms of verse,  
 Nears more to heaven in aught, than when we nurse  
 And surety give to love and Brotherhood.

Anthropophagi in Othello's mood ; 10  
 Ulysses storm'd and his enchanted belt  
 Glow with the Muse, but they are never felt  
 Unbosom'd so and so eternal made,  
 Such tender incense in their laurel shade  
 To all the regent sisters of the Nine 15  
 As this poor offering to you, sister mine.

Kind sister ! aye, this third name says you are ;  
 Enchanted has it been the Lord knows where ;  
 And may it taste to you like good old wine,  
 Take you to real happiness and give 20  
 Sons, daughters and a home like honied hive.

---

This acrostic seems to have been written at the foot of Helvellyn on the 27th of June 1818 ; for although it appears in the Winchester journal-letter of September 1819 as given in the New York *World* of the 25th of June 1877, it purports to be copied from an old letter which reached Liverpool after the George Keatses had sailed for America, and which was therefore returned to the poet. The words "Foot of Helvellyn, June 27th," are printed in *The World* as if they belonged to the next piece copied into the journal-letter ; but the context indicates that the date really belongs to the acrostic. Keats (with his friend Charles Armitage Brown) was on the way to Carlisle, to take coach there for Dumfries and begin the walking tour in Scotland on which the first serious break-down of his health occurred. Leaving London about the middle of June, they had seen the George Keatses off from Liverpool for America, and had then started walking from Lancaster ; so that, by the time Keats was writing the acrostic, he had already been walking several days ; and four days later the friends reached Carlisle, ending there the English portion of their walk.



## SONNET.

## ON VISITING THE TOMB OF BURNS.

THE town, the churchyard, and the setting sun,  
 The clouds, the trees, the rounded hills all seem,  
 Though beautiful, cold — strange — as in a dream,  
 I dreamed long ago, now new begun.  
 The short-liv'd, paly Summer is but won  
 From Winter's ague, for one hour's gleam;  
 Though sapphire-warm, their stars do never beam:  
 All is cold Beauty; pain is never done:  
 For who has mind to relish, Minos-wise,  
 The Real of Beauty, free from that dead hue  
 Sickly imagination and sick pride  
 Canst wan upon it! Burns! with honour due  
 I oft have honour'd thee. Great shadow, hide  
 Thy face: I sin against thy native skies.

This sonnet, with which the poems of the Scotch tour with Brown begins, was not a very "prosperous opening." It seems to have been written on the 2nd of July 1818, and was first given by Lord Houghton in the *Life, Letters &c.* in 1848, as part of a letter to Tom Keats, wherein the poet sufficiently explains the comparative poverty of the production, thus:—

"You will see by this sonnet that I am at Dumtries. We have dined in Scotland. Burns's tomb is in the church-yard corner, not very much to my taste, though on a scale large enough to show they wanted to honour him. Mrs. Burns lives in this place; most likely we shall see her to-morrow. This sonnet I have written in a strange mood, half-asleep. I know not how it is, the clouds, the sky, the houses, all seem anti-Grecian and anti-Charlemagnish. I will endeavour to get rid of my prejudices and tell you fairly about the Scotch."

It is well to say at once that the precise dates assigned to this series of poems are not absolutely certain; for Keats himself was notoriously inexact about dates, and, according to his own confession, "never knew." Thus the next published letter, containing the *Meg Merrilies* poem, is dated "Auchincraig, 2nd July;" and in it we read "yesterday was passed in Kirkcaldy;" without any fresh date, though probably this statement belongs to the day on which Keats was at Newton Stewart.

I have before me an unpublished letter to his sister, wherein, beginning at Dumtries on the 2nd, he says he shall be at Kirkcaldy the next day; speaks of visiting Burns's tomb "yesterday;" and says he has so many interruptions he cannot fill a letter in one day. Unfortunately these interruptions sometimes occurred in the middle of a paragraph, and one cannot always be sure at what point the date changes.

## MEG MERRILIES.

1.

OLD MEG she was a Gipsy,  
 And liv'd upon the Moors :  
 Her bed it was the brown heath turf,  
 And her house was out of doors.

2.

Her apples were swart blackberries,  
 Her currants pods o' broom ;  
 Her wine was dew of the wild white rose,  
 Her book a churchyard tomb.

3.

Her Brothers were the craggy hills,  
 Her Sisters larchen trees —  
 Alone with her great family  
 She liv'd as she did please.

---

Keats and his companion seem to have started from Dumfries again on the 2nd of July, "through Galloway—all very pleasant and pretty with no fatigue when one is used to it," as he writes to his sister, adding "We are in the midst of Meg Merrilies' country of whom I suppose you have heard," and giving her forthwith a copy of the poem. Lord Houghton says of this stage—

"The pedestrians passed by Solway Frith through that delightful part of Kirkcudbrightshire, the scene of 'Guy Mannering.' Keats had never read the novel, but was much struck with the character of Meg Merrilies as delineated to him by Brown. He seemed at once to realise the creation of the novelist, and, suddenly stopping in the pathway, at a point where a profusion of honeysuckles, wild rose, and fox-glove, mingled with the bramble and broom that filled up the spaces between the shattered rocks, he cried out, 'Without a shadow of doubt on that spot has old Meg Merrilies often boiled her kettle.'"

On the 3rd of July he writes to Tom from "Auchtercairn" (meaning, I presume, Auchencairn, some six miles east of Kirkcudbright)—"We are now in Meg Merrilies' country, and have, this morning, passed through some parts exactly suited to her. Kirkcudbright County is very beautiful, very wild, with craggy hills, somewhat in the Westmoreland fashion. We have come down from Dumfries to the sea-coast part of it. The following song you will have from Dilke, but perhaps you would like it here."

I should judge that the scene given by Brown to Lord Houghton belonged rather to the morning of the 3rd than to the evening of the 2nd; and that Keats took out his current letter to his sister at Auchencairn on pausing there to breakfast, and wrote the poem into it when he began a fresh letter to Tom with it. Thus, besides a rough draft, there would be three fair copies of the poem, one for Tom, one for Fanny, and one for Mr. Dilke. The only copy I have seen is that for his sister, from which I have revised the text. It is written in stanzas of four lines,—not

## 5.

But every morn of woodbine fresh  
 She made her garlanding,  
 And every night the dark glen Yew  
 She wove, and she would sing.

## 6.

And with her fingers old and brown  
 She plaited Mats o' Rushes,  
 And gave them to the Cottagers  
 She met among the Bushes.

## 7.

Old Meg was brave as Margaret Queen  
 And tall as Amazon:  
 An old red blanket cloak she wore;  
 A chip hat had she on.  
 God rest her aged bones somewhere —  
 She died full long ago!

---

lit as hitherto given, — the final stanza having thus two extra  
 ng unfinished as it appears in previous editions. In this ma  
 ations of consequence occur. Stanza 4 shows a cancelled read  
 ine 1; and stanza 6 affords a rejected variant of the first line —

And sometimes with her fingers old...

head-gear of stanza 7 is clearly a *chip hat*, and not a *ship-hat*  
 ; this confirms a suggestion of the late Dante Gabriel Rossetti  
 hat he considered *chip* made better sense (as it obviously de-  
 ved it stood so in *Hand & Mill* —

## A SONG ABOUT MYSELF.

## I.

**T**HERE was a naughty Boy,  
 A naughty boy was he,  
 He would not stop at home,  
 He could not quiet be —  
 He took  
 In his Knapsack  
 A Book  
 Full of vowels  
 And a shirt  
 With some towels —  
 A slight cap  
 For night cap —  
 A hair brush,  
 Comb ditto,  
 New Stockings  
 For old ones  
 Would split O!  
 This Knapsack  
 Tight at's back  
 He rivetted close  
 And follow'd his Nose  
 To the North,  
 To the North,  
 And follow'd his nose  
 To the North.

## 2.

There was a naughty boy  
 And a naughty boy was he,  
 For nothing would he do  
 But scribble poetry —

---

In the letter to his sister mentioned in the note to *Meg Merrilies*, Keats makes a fresh start with — "since I scribbled the Song we have walked through a beautiful Country to Kirkcudbright — at which place I will write you a song about myself." He then proceeds with the very curious piece of doggerel now first given from the manuscript, and excuses himself on the plea of fatigue. My chief purpose in including these verses here is that students may note the variety of the pieces of this class addressed to different correspondents. Compare this with the Devon pieces sent to Haydon, and more particularly with *The Giddy*, sent to Tom a little later than this. I presume this piece should be dated the 3rd of July 1818.

the other,  
And away  
In a Pother  
He ran  
To the mountains  
And fountains  
And ghostes  
And Postes  
And witches  
And ditches  
And wrote  
In his coat  
When the weather  
Was cool,  
Fear of gout,  
And without  
When the weather  
Was warm —  
Och the charm  
When we choose  
To follow one's nose  
To the north,  
To the north,  
To follow one's nose  
To the north !

3.

There was a naughty boy  
And a naughty boy was he,  
He kept little fishes



Of his Granny-good —  
He often would  
Hurly burly  
Get up early  
And go  
By hook or crook  
To the brook  
And bring home  
Miller's thumb,  
Tittlebat  
Not over fat,  
Minnows small  
As the stall  
Of a glove,  
Not above  
The size  
Of a nice  
Little Baby's  
Little fingers —  
O he made  
'Twas his trade  
Of Fish a pretty Kettle  
A Kettle —  
A Kettle  
Of Fish a pretty Kettle  
A Kettle!

+

There was a naughty Boy,  
And a naughty Boy was he,  
He ran away to Scotland  
The people for to see —  
Then he found  
That the ground  
Was as hard,  
That a yard  
Was as long,  
That a song  
Was as merry,

---

(4) There is an under-current of dissatisfaction with things Caledonian in this fourth stanza; and indeed I do not think Keats ever got entirely rid of this during the whole of the tour, albeit he enjoyed many transient visitations of true enthusiasm inspired both by fine scenery and by associations.

That a cherry  
 Was as red —  
 That lead  
 Was as weighty,  
 That fourscore  
 Was as eighty,  
 That a door  
 Was as wooden  
 As in England —  
 So he stood in his shoes  
 And he wonder'd,  
 He wonder'd,  
 He stood in his shoes  
 And he wonder'd.

## SONNET.

TO AILSA ROCK.\*

**H**EARKEN, thou craggy ocean pyramid!  
 Give answer from thy voice, the sea-fowls' screams!  
 When were thy shoulders mantled in huge streams?  
 When, from the sun, was thy broad forehead hid?  
 How long is't since the mighty power bid  
 Thee heave to airy sleep from fathom dreams?  
 Sleep in the lap of thunder or sunbeams,  
 Or when grey clouds are thy cold coverlid.  
 Thou answer'st not; for thou art dead asleep:

\* From Kirkcudbright the tourists went to Newton Stewart and thence through Wigtonshire to Port Patrick, visiting Glenluce and Stranraer on the way. From Port Patrick they crossed in the mail packet to Ireland, reaching Donaghadee on the 5th of July. They walked from Donaghadee to Belfast and back, having abandoned the idea of seeing the Giant's Causeway on account of the expense, — crossed again so as to sleep at Port Patrick on the 8th, and then resumed their Scotch walk. Lord Houghton says —

"Returning from Ireland, the travellers proceeded northwards by the coast, Ailsa Rock constantly in their view. That fine object first appeared to them, in the full sunlight, like a transparent tortoise asleep upon the calm water, then, as they advanced, displaying its lofty shoulders, and, as they still went on, losing its distinctness in the mountains of Arran and the extent of Cantire that rose behind."

His Lordship records that the sonnet to Ailsa Rock was written in the inn at Girvan; and, as Keats was at Maybole on the 11th, and Girvan is more than three quarters of the way from Port Patrick to Maybole, the sonnet should be dated the 10th or 11th of July 1818. It appeared in Leigh Hunt's *Literary Pocket-book* for 1819, from which I give the text, and the title — with the preposition *to*, not *on* as in other editions.

Thy life is but two dead eternities —  
 The last in air, the former in the deep;  
 First with the whales, last with the eagle-skies —  
 Drown'd wast thou till an earthquake made thee steep,  
 Another cannot wake thy giant size.

## SONNET.\*

WRITTEN IN THE COTTAGE WHERE BURNS WAS BORN.

THIS mortal body of a thousand days  
 Now fills, O Burns, a space in thine own room,  
 Where thou didst dream alone on budded bays,  
 Happy and thoughtless of thy day of doom!  
 My pulse is warm with thine own Barley-bree,  
 My head is light with pledging a great soul,  
 My eyes are wandering, and I cannot see,  
 Fancy is dead and drunken at its goal;  
 Yet can I stamp my foot upon thy floor,  
 Yet can I ope thy window-sash to find  
 The meadow thou hast tramped o'er and o'er, —  
 Yet can I think of thee till thought is blind, —  
 Yet can I gulp a bumper to thy name, —  
 O smile among the shades, for this is fame!

\* In giving this sonnet in the *Life, Letters* &c. next to that on Visiting the Tomb of Burns, Lord Houghton recorded that it was written "in the whisky-shop into which the cottage where Burns was born was converted." The date however is not the same as that of the other, as the travellers made the détour to the coast and across to Ireland already described, before coming to Burns's birthplace. The following extract from a letter of Keats's accompanies the sonnet in the *Life*: — "The 'bonnie Doon' is the sweetest river I ever saw — overhung with fine trees as far as we could see. We stood some time on the 'brig' o'er which 'Tam o' Shanter' fled — we took a pinch of snuff on the key stone — then we proceeded to the auld Kirk of Alloway. Then we went to the cottage in which Burns was born; there was a board to that effect by the door's side; it had the same effect as the same sort of memorial at Stratford-upon-Avon. We drank some toddy to Burns's memory with an old man who knew him. There was something good in his description of Burns's melancholy the last time he saw him. I was determined to write a sonnet in the cottage: I did, but it was so bad I cannot venture it here." Lord Houghton gave this as from a letter to Haydon: it is really an edited extract from a letter to Tom Keats which happens to have been pasted into Haydon's journal.

On the 11th of July, at Maybole, Keats began a letter to Reynolds, the whole of which is very interesting; but the following passage is, in this connexion, peculiarly so:—

"I begin a letter to you because I am approaching Burns's cottage very fast. We have made continual enquiries from the time we left his tomb at Dumfries-



## LINES

WRITTEN IN THE HIGHLANDS AFTER A VISIT TO BURNS'S COUNTRY.\*

**T**HERE is a charm in footing slow across a silent plain,  
 Where patriot battle has been fought, where glory had the gain;  
 There is a pleasure on the heath where Druids old have been,  
 Where mantles grey have rustled by and swept the nettles green;  
 There is a joy in every spot made known by times of old, 5  
 New to the feet, although each tale a hundred times be told;  
 There is a deeper joy than all, more solemn in the heart,  
 More parching to the tongue than all, of more divine a smart,  
 When weary steps forget themselves upon a pleasant turf,  
 Upon hot sand, or flinty road, or sea-shore iron scurf, 10  
 Toward the castle or the cot, where long ago was born  
 One who was great through mortal days, and died of fame unshorn.  
 Light heather-bells may tremble then, but they are far away;  
 Wood-lark may sing from sandy fern, — the Sun may hear his lay;

His name, of course, is known all about: his great reputation among the plodding people is, 'that he wrote a good *mony* sensible things.' One of the pleasantest ways of annulling self is approaching such a shrine as the Cottage of Burns: we need not think of his misery — that is all gone, bad luck to it! I shall look upon it hereafter with unmixed pleasure, as I do on my Stratford-on-Avon day with Bailey. I shall fill this sheet for you in the Bardie's country, going no further than this, till I get to the town of Ayr, which will be a nine miles walk to tea."

Probably the proceedings related to Tom Keats took place on the 12th: the travellers must have passed no great way from Burns's cottage on the road to Ayr, seeing that the cottage is some two miles south of the town; but they may have wished to start with renewed vigour after a night's rest on this quasi-religious part of their pilgrimage. To Reynolds also Keats spoke disparagingly of the sonnet, as too bad for transcription; and to Bailey he wrote that it was "so wretched" that he destroyed it. Nevertheless it fortunately survived; and I heartily concur in the opinion of the late Dante Gabriel Rossetti, who observes in a letter to me that this sonnet, "for all Keats says of it himself, is a fine thing." Lord Houghton comments thus — "The 'local colour' is strong in it: it might have been written where 'Willie brewed a peck o' maut,' and its geniality would have delighted the object of its admiration."

\*After leaving Ayr Keats and Brown appear to have been detained by rain at some place twelve miles along the road, when Keats took the opportunity of going on with his letter to Reynolds begun at Maybole. They were en route for Glasgow (casually mentioned in a letter to Bailey begun at Inverary on the 18th of July), which they took on their way from Ayr to Loch Lomond and Inverary. The poem given above is mentioned to Bailey as having been written within a few days of the sonnet in Burns's cottage, so that, although it is headed as above in the manuscript written at the end of Sir Charles Dilke's copy of *Endymion*, it seems more probable that the term *Highlands* was used in a lax popular sense than that the poem was composed after the visit to Staffa. Indeed in the letter to Bailey he speaks of the whole tour as in the Highlands. Keats expected to be by Loch Lomond about the 15th of July, and may have written this poem on high ground anywhere about the Loch, with the scenery of which he was very much impressed. They did not



POSTHUMOUS AND FUGITIVE POEMS. 413

Runnels may kiss the grass on shelves and shallows clear, 15  
But their low voices are not heard, though come on travels drear;  
Blood-red the Sun may set behind black mountain peaks;  
Blue tides may sluice and drench their time in caves and weedy  
creeks;  
Eagles may seem to sleep wing-wide upon the air;  
Ring-doves may fly convuls'd across to some high-cedar'd lair; 20  
But the forgotten eye is still fast lidded to the ground,  
As Palmer's, that with weariness, mid-desert shrine hath found.  
At such a time the soul's a child, in childhood is the brain;  
Forgotten is the worldly heart — alone, it beats in vain. —  
Aye, if a madman could have leave to pass a healthful day 25  
To tell his forehead's swoon and faint when first began decay,  
He might make tremble many a one whose spirit had gone forth  
To find a Bard's low cradle-place about the silent North!  
Scanty the hour and few the steps beyond the bourn of care,  
Beyond the sweet and bitter world, — beyond it unaware! 30  
Scanty the hour and few the steps, because a longer stay  
Would bar return, and make a man forget his mortal way:  
O horrible! to lose the sight of well remember'd face,  
Of Brother's eyes, of Sister's brow — constant to every place;  
Filling the air, as on we move, with portraiture intense; 35  
More warm than those heroic tints that pain a painter's sense,  
When shapes of old come striding by, and visages of old,  
Locks shining black, hair scanty grey, and passions manifold.  
No, no, that horror cannot be, for at the cable's length  
Man feels the gentle anchor pull and gladdens in its strength: — 40  
One hour, half-idiot, he stands by mossy waterfall,  
But in the very next he reads his soul's memorial: —  
He reads it on the mountain's height, where chance he may sit down  
Upon rough marble diadem — that hill's eternal crown.  
Yet be his anchor e'er so fast, room is there for a prayer 45  
That man may never lose his mind on mountains black and bare;  
That he may stray league after league some great birth-place to find  
And keep his vision clear from speck, his inward sight unblind.

ascend Ben Lomond as intended, being deterred by expense and need of rest. I have adopted in the main the text of the manuscript, which varies a good deal in minor detail from the poem as printed by Lord Houghton from the copy "cross-scribed" as Keats says, on his letter to Bailey, in which he speaks of the lines as cousin-german to the subject of the sonnet in Burns's cottage. The principal variations of Lord Houghton's edition are *had* for *has* in line 2, *netled* for *nettles* in line 4, *in* for *by* in line 5, *surf* for *scurf* in line 10 (a reading in which the support of the manuscript may possibly be claimed as *scurf* is altered to *surf*, though in my opinion not by Keats), and *in* for *on* in line 46. In line 23 the manuscript reads *world's* for *soul's*; but this must, I think, be an error of transcription, induced by the presence of the word *worldly* in the next line: in that case I follow Lord Houghton's reading, *soul's*.

Open your ears and stay your t[r]udge  
Whilst I in dudgeon sing.

2.

The Gadfly he hath stung me sore —  
O may he ne'er sting you!  
But we have many a horrid bore  
He may sting black and blue.

3.

Has any here an old grey Mare  
With three legs all her store,  
O put it to her Buttocks bare  
And straight she'll run on four.

4.

Has any here a Lawyer suit  
Of 1743,  
Take Lawyer's nose and put it to't  
And you the end will see.

---

On the 17th of July 1818 the travellers were approaching Inverness in a letter to his brother Tom at "Cairn-something," having walked breakfast through "two tremendous Glens." One of these was Glenrath perhaps a smaller glen at the southern extremity of Glenfyne mentioned later on in the letter and is also identifiable by a place called "Bankful" which the poet names; and at the end of the smaller glen far from the northern extremity of Loch Fyne, a bath in which of the ballad gives place to the "Cairn-something."

## 5.

Is there a Man in Parliament  
 Dum[b-]founder'd in his speech,  
 O let his neighbour make a rent  
 And put one in his breech.

## 6.

O Lowther how much better thou  
 Hadst figur'd t'other day  
 When to the folks thou mad'st a bow  
 And hadst no more to say.

## 7.

If lucky Gadfly had but ta'en  
 His seat \* \* \*  
 And put thee to a little pain  
 To save thee from a worse.

## 8.

Better than Southey it had been,  
 Better than Mr. D——,  
 Better than Wordsworth too, I ween,  
 Better than Mr. V——.

## 9.

Forgive me pray good people all  
 For deviating so —  
 In spirit sure I had a call —  
 And now I on will go.

---

(6-8) I have not met with any account of the particular circumstance in which one of the members for Westmoreland figured in the manner described in stanza 6; but probably the contemporary newspaper press might show what episode Keats was contemplating in the memorable campaign in which the whigs tried to upset the then time-honoured influence of the House of Lowther, which had nominated the two county members, undisputedly, for a long time. The particular Lowther of stanza 6 was probably the Treasury Lord who was afterwards second Earl of Lonsdale. Wordsworth's *Two Addresses to the Freeholders of Westmorland* are probably glanced at in stanza 8; "Mr. V——" would doubtless be the then Chancellor of the Exchequer, Nicholas Vansittart; and "Mr. D——" may perhaps have been Mr. Dundas, who had held office in a previous ministry; but this last name rests upon mere conjecture.

## 11.

O put a Gadfly to that thing  
 She keeps so white and pert—  
 I mean the finger for the ring,  
 And it will breed a wort.

## 12.

Has any here a pious spouse  
 Who seven times a day  
 Scolds as King David pray'd, to chouse  
 And have her holy way—

## 13.

O let a Gadfly's little sting  
 Persuade her sacred tongue  
 That noises are a common thing,  
 But that her bell has rung.

## 14.

And as this is the summum bo-  
 num of all conquering,  
 I leave "withouten wordes mo"  
 The Gadfly's little sting.

---

) The reference is probably to the hero of Scott's novel *The Anti*  
 the Honourable William Geraldin, heir to the Earl of Glenallar  
 ghout the book as Mr. Lovel.

) Perhaps the reference is to the Duke of...

## SONNET.

ON HEARING THE BAG-PIPE AND SEEING "THE STRANGER" PLAYED  
AT INVERARY.

OF late two dainties were before me plac'd  
 Sweet, holy, pure, sacred and innocent,  
 From the ninth sphere to me benignly sent  
 That Gods might know my own particular taste :  
 First the soft Bag-pipe mourn'd with zealous haste,  
 The Stranger next with head on bosom bent  
 Sigh'd ; rueful again the piteous Bag-pipe went,  
 Again the Stranger sighings fresh did waste.  
 O Bag-pipe thou didst steal my heart away —  
 O Stranger thou my nerves from Pipe didst charm —  
 O Bag-pipe thou didst re-assert thy sway —  
 Again thou Stranger gav'st me fresh alarm —  
 Alas ! I could not choose. Ah ! my poor heart  
 Mum chance art thou with both oblig'd to part.

It would seem to have been still the 17th of July when Keats and Brown "came round the end of Loch Fyne to Inverary," as the poet tells his brother Tom in continuing the letter begun at Cairndow ; for he makes a fresh start with "last evening," and lower down another fresh start dated July 20th in which he speaks of the lapse of two days. The letter to Bailey already mentioned is also dated "Inverary, July 18;" and that was doubtless the day on which he recounted to Tom the arrival at Inverary. Keats had been excruciated by a solo on the bag-pipe on the way, "I thought," he says, "the brute would never have done—yet was I doomed to hear another. On entering Inverary we saw a Play Bill—Brown was knock'd up from new shoes—so I went to the Barn alone where I saw the Stranger accompanied by a Bag-pipe. There they went on about 'interesting creators' and 'human nater'—till the curtain fell and then came the Bag-pipe. When Mrs. Haller fainted down went the curtain and out came the Bag-pipe—at the heartrending, shoemending reconciliation the Piper blew amain. I never read or saw this play before; not the Bag-pipe nor the wretched players themselves were little in comparison with it—thank heaven it has been scoffed at lately almost to a fashion." The sonnet given above follows this passage without a break; and I presume we may safely assign it to the 18th of July 1818. It has already been published, in *The Athenaeum* of the 7th of June 1873. Without being in any sense a good sonnet, it is highly interesting as the record of a mood, and of Keats's attitude towards the wretched but once renowned work of August von Kotzebue, translated into English and performed at Drury Lane as long ago as 1798. The part of Mrs. Haller has been graced by no less a player than Mrs. Siddons. The manuscript of the sonnet shows a cancelled reading in line 8, *sighed in discontent*, rejected of course as upsetting the metre.

## STAFFA.

NOT Aladdin magian  
 Ever such a work began ;  
 Not the wizard of the Dee  
 Ever such a dream could see ;  
 Not St. John, in Patmos' Isle, 5  
 In the passion of his toil,  
 When he saw the churches seven,  
 Golden-aisl'd, built up in heaven,  
 Gaz'd at such a rugged wonder,  
 As I stood its roofing under. 10  
 Lo ! I saw one sleeping there,  
 On the marble cold and bare ;  
 While the surges wash'd his feet,  
 And his garments white did beat  
 Drench'd about the sombre rocks ; 15  
 On his neck his well-grown locks,  
 Lifted dry above the main,  
 Were upon the curl again.  
 "What is this? and what art thou?"  
 Whisper'd I, and touch'd his brow ; 20  
 "What art thou? and what is this?"  
 Whisper'd I, and strove to kiss

---

After a detention of a few hours at Inverary owing to Brown's suffering from sore feet, the travellers started again on the 10th of January, walked along "20 miles by the side of Loch Awe" — southward, I suppose, for they next paused "between Loch Craignish and the sea just opposite Long Island," where Keats gives a very minute account to Tom of the *locale*. They then pushed on to Oban, "15 miles in a soaking rain" — due north again. At Oban Keats finished the unpublished letter to Tom containing *The Giddy* and the *Stranger* sonnet, and posted it, announcing that the travellers had given up the idea of Mull and Staffa on account of the expense. This was probably on the 22nd of July. On the 23rd he begins a fresh letter (*Life, Letters &c.*) stating that just after he had posted the other the guide to Mull came in and made a bargain with them. This latter letter is dated the 23rd of July, "Dunacullen" in the *Life*: "Dimancullen" is the name given in the same connexion in the *New York World*, where some Keats documents appeared; but probably the place indicated is Derrynacullen, which is at a situation on the waik through the southern part of the Isle of Mull corresponding with Keats's narrative. This narrative seems to show that on the 23rd of July they crossed from Oban to Kerrera by one ferry and from Kerrera to Mull by another, and walked across the south of the Island to the western extremity to cross to Iona by boat. By the 26th, Keats resumed his letter to Tom at Oban, and narrated that the thirty-seven miles of walking had been very miserable, and that he and Brown had taken a boat at a bargain to carry them from Iona to Staffa, and land them finally at the head of Loch Nakeal, whence they could return to Oban by a better route. He vividly describes Staffa, including Fingal's Cave, breaks into verse with the lines given above, and resumes prose with "I am

The spirit's hand, to wake his eyes ;  
 Up he started in a trice :  
 " I am Lycidas," said he, 25  
 " Fam'd in funeral minstrelsy !  
 This was architectur'd thus  
 By the great Oceanus ! —  
 Here his mighty waters play  
 Hollow organs all the day ; 30  
 Here, by turns, his dolphins all,  
 Finny palmers, great and small,  
 Come to pay devotion due, —  
 Each a mouth of pearls must strew !  
 Many a mortal of these days, 35  
 Dares to pass our sacred ways ;  
 Dares to touch, audaciously,  
 This cathedral of the sea !  
 I have been the pontiff-priest,  
 Where the waters never rest, 40  
 Where a fledgy sea-bird choir  
 Soars for ever ! Holy fire  
 I have hid from mortal man ;  
 Proteus is my Sacristan !  
 But the dulled eye of mortal 45  
 Hath pass'd beyond the rocky portal ;  
 So for ever will I leave  
 Such a taint, and soon unweave  
 All the magic of the place."  
 \* \* \* \* \*  
 So saying, with a Spirit's glance 50  
 He dived !

sorry I am so indolent as to write such stuff as this." Probably the poem should be dated the 26th of July, 1818. In the *Life, Letters &c.*, where it first appeared, is no indication of a hiatus to account for the lack of rhyme at the close. Mr. Colvin found the explanation in a commonplace book into which Woodhouse transcribed the chief part of Keats's poems remaining unpublished in 1819. In that book, *Staffa* is continued thus in pencil after line 49:—

"Tis now free to stupid face,  
 To cutters, and to Fashion boats,  
 To cravats and to petticoats : —  
 The great sea shall war it down,  
 For its fame shall not be blown  
 At each farthing Quadrille dance.  
 So saying with a spirit's glance  
 He dived.

The holograph letter, happily extant, contains the six doggerel lines; but in line 45 the epithet is *stupid*, not *dulled*. The circumstances do not warrant the restoration of the doggerel lines to the text.





## SONNET.

WRITTEN UPON THE TOP OF BEN NEVIS.

READ me a lesson, Muse, and speak it loud  
Upon the top of Nevis, blind in mist!  
I look into the chasms, and a shroud  
Vapourous doth hide them, — just so much I wist  
Mankind do know of hell; I look o'erhead,  
And there is sullen mist, — even so much  
Mankind can tell of heaven; mist is spread  
Before the earth, beneath me, — even such,  
Even so vague is man's sight of himself!  
Here are the craggy stones beneath my feet, —  
Thus much I know that, a poor witless elf,  
I tread on them, — that all my eye doth meet  
Is mist and crag, not only on this height,  
But in the world of thought and mental might!

---

At Oban, apparently on the 26th of July, the decision was taken to rest "a day or two" before pushing on to Fort William and Inverness. I find no precise record of the date of the ascent of Ben Nevis; but it was probably about the 1st of August 1818. Lord Houghton says in the *Life, Letters &c.*, where this sonnet first appeared, — "From Fort William Keats mounted Ben Nevis. When on the summit a cloud enveloped him, and sitting on the stones, as it slowly wafted away, showing a tremendous precipice into the valley below, he wrote these lines."

The late Dante Gabriel Rossetti wrote to me of this sonnet as "perhaps the most thoughtful of Keats, and greatly superior in execution to the draft on Ailsa Crag." It was certainly by no means an unworthy finish to the tour, though I must confess to finding a little want of spontaneity — not to be wondered at when we consider that Keats, though writing so bravely to his friends, had undertaken a task far beyond his physical strength, and probably one which laid the foundations of his mortal illness. He speaks to Tom lightly enough of "a slight sore throat;" but in a letter which Brown wrote from Inverness on the 7th of August, he says "Mr. Keats will leave me, and I am full of sorrow about it; . . . a violent cold and an ulcerated throat make it a matter of prudence that he should go to London in the Packet: he has been unwell for some time, and the Physician here is of opinion he will not recover if he journeys on foot thro' all weathers and under so many privations." So Brown went on to walk another 1200 miles alone, and Keats having accomplished 600 and odd, "went on board the smack from Cromarty," as he says in a hitherto unpublished letter to his sister dated "Hampstead, August 18th" and "after a nine days passage . . . landed at London Bridge" on the 17th of August 1818.

A PROPHECY: TO GEORGE KEATS IN AMERICA.

'TIS the witching hour of night,  
 Orbed is the moon and bright,  
 And the stars they glisten, glisten,  
 Seeming with bright eyes to listen —  
 For what listen they? 5

For a song and for a charm,  
 See they glisten in alarm,  
 And the moon is waxing warm  
 To hear what I shall say.

Moon! keep wide thy golden ears — 10  
 Hearken, stars! and hearken, spheres! —  
 Hearken, thou eternal sky!  
 I sing an infant's lullaby,  
 A pretty lullaby.

Listen, listen, listen, listen, 15  
 Glisten, glisten, glisten, glisten,  
 And hear my lullaby!  
 Though the rushes that will make  
 Its cradle still are in the lake —  
 Though the linen that will be 20  
 Its swathe, is on the cotton tree —  
 Though the woollen that will keep  
 It warm, is on the silly sheep —  
 Listen, starlight, listen, listen,  
 Glisten, glisten, glisten, glisten, 25  
 And hear my lullaby!

Child, I see thee! Child, I've found thee  
 Midst of the quiet all around thee!  
 Child, I see thee! Child, I spy thee!  
 And thy mother sweet is nigh thee! 30  
 Child, I know thee! Child no more,  
 But a Poet evermore!  
 See, see, the lyre, the lyre,  
 In a flame of fire,

---

These lines occur in a letter to George Keats dated the 29th of October 1818, first given by Lord Houghton in the *Life, Letters &c.*, and appear to belong to that date. They follow immediately upon this passage:—

“If I had a prayer to make for any great good, next to Tom's recovery, it should be that one of your children should be the first American poet. I have a great mind to make a prophecy; and they say that prophecies work out their own fulfilment.”

It dares what no one dares!  
 It lifts its little hand into the flame  
 Unharm'd, and on the strings  
 Paddles a little tune, and sings,  
 With dumb endeavour sweetly —  
 Bard art thou completely!  
     Little child  
     O' th' western wild,  
 Bard art thou completely!  
 Sweetly with dumb endeavour,  
 A Poet now or never,  
     Little child  
     O' th' western wild,  
 A Poet now or never!

#### TRANSLATION FROM A SONNET OF RONSA

**N**ATURE withheld Cassandra in the skies,  
 For more adornment, a full thousand years;  
 She took their cream of Beauty's fairest dyes,  
 And shap'd and tinted her above all Peers:  
 Meanwhile Love kept her dearly with his wings,  
 And underneath their shadow fill'd her eyes

---

-3) This couplet recalls curiously one in the *Daisy's Song* in *Ætæa*, page 398 of this volume, I presume this translation was made about September 1818. It was first published by Houghton in the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848) in a letter to Reynolds belonging to that time. The sonnet follows the words "Here is a translation of a Sonnet of Ronsard which I think will be interesting to you."

With such a richness that the cloudy Kings  
 Of high Olympus utter'd slavish sighs.  
 When from the Heavens I saw her first descend,  
 My heart took fire, and only burning pains,  
 They were my pleasures — they my Life's sad end;  
 Love pour'd her beauty into my warm veins. . .

\* \* \* \* \*

SPENSERIAN STANZA.\*

WRITTEN AT THE CLOSE OF CANTO II, BOOK V, OF "THE FAERIE QUEENE."

**I**N after-time, a sage of mickle lore  
 Yclep'd Typographus, the Giant took,  
 And did refit his limbs as heretofore,

version, which I have adopted above, merely substituting 'd for ed in some few words and *dyes* for *dies* in line 3; but to show the variations I here transcribe the manuscript:

Nature withheld Cassandra in the skies  
 For meet adornment a full thousand years;  
 She took their cream of Beauty, fairest dies  
 And shaped and tinted her above all peers.  
 Love meanwhile held her dearly with his wings  
 And underneath their shadow charm'd her eyes  
 To such a richness, that the cloudy Kings  
 Of high Olympus uttered slavish sighs—  
 When I beheld her on the Earth descend  
 My heart began to burn— and only pains  
 They were my pleasures — they my sad Life's end—  
 Love pour'd her Beauty into my warm veins...

This manuscript, which shows a cancelled reading of line 10—

My heart began to burn — my head to daze —

is something of a curiosity. Keats wrote it with a pencil; and the pencilling has been gone over with a pen and ink. After a very careful examination I am confident that Keats did not ink over his pencil draft himself, and almost equally confident that this was done by Woodhouse — perhaps at the request of Severn, to whom the book passed from Keats. Beneath the unfinished sonnet is a pencilled memorandum in Woodhouse's writing, signed "R. W.," as follows:

"This is a translation from one of Ronsard's sonnets (a Book I lent Keats) — It begins

'Nature ornant Cassandre qui devoit  
 De ses forcer les plus rebelles.'

I believe I have the translation complete at home."

The original sonnet will be found in the Appendix.

\* This stanza, given by Lord Houghton in the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848), Volume I, page 281, was preceded by the following note:—

"The copy of Spenser which Keats had in daily use, contains the following

And made him read in many a learned book,  
 And into many a lively legend look ;  
 Thereby in goodly themes so training him,  
 That all his brutishness he quite forsook,  
 When, meeting Artegal and Talus grim,  
 The one he struck stone-blind, the other's eyes wox dim.

## THE EVE OF SAINT MARK.\*

A FRAGMENT.

UPON a Sabbath-day it fell ;  
 Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell,  
 That call'd the folk to evening prayer ;  
 The city streets were clean and fair  
 From wholesome drench of April rains ; 5  
 And, on the western window panes  
 The chilly sunset faintly told  
 Of unmatu'r'd green vallies cold,  
 Of the green thorny bloomless hedge,  
 Of rivers new with spring-tide sedge, 10

stanza, inserted at the close of Canto II, Book V. His sympathies were very much on the side of the revolutionary 'Gyant,' who 'undertook for to repair' the 'realms and nations run awry,' and to suppress 'tyrants that make men subject to their law,' 'and lordings curbe that commons over-aw,' while he grudged the legitimate victory, as he rejected the conservative philosophy, of the 'righteous Artegal' and his comrade, the fierce defender of privilege and order. And he expressed, in this *ex post facto* prophecy, his conviction of the ultimate triumph of freedom and equality by the power of transmitted knowledge."

I have no data whereby to fix the period of this commentary of Keats on the political attitude of Spenser; but I should judge it to belong to the end of 1818 or thereabouts. The copy of Spenser in which the stanza was written is not now forthcoming: it passed into the hands of Miss Brawne, and was lost, with other books, many years after Keats's death.

\* It should be borne in mind that the eve of St. Mark is the 24th of April.

*The Eve of St. Mark* was probably begun in the winter of 1818-19; for in a letter to George Keats and his wife the poet says under date February 14, "In my next packet I shall send you . . . if I should have finished it, a little thing, called the 'Eve of St. Mark.'" Lord Houghton first published the poem among the Literary Remains in 1848, with the date 1819. The late Dante Gabriel Rossetti, writing to send me some information about the superstition connected with the Eve of St. Mark, says, — "Keats's unfinished poem on that subject is perhaps, with *La Belle Dame sans Merci*, the chastest and choicest example of his maturing manner, and shows astonishingly real mediævalism for one not bred as an artist. I copy an extract [from *The Unseen World* (Masters, 1853), page 72] which I have no doubt embodies the superstition in accordance with which Keats meant to develop his poem. It is much akin to the belief connected with the Eve of St. Agnes.

Of primroses by shelter'd rills,  
 And daisies on the aguish hills.  
 Twice holy was the Sabbath-bell :  
 The silent streets were crowded well  
 With staid and pious companies, 15  
 Warm from their fire-side orat'ries ;  
 And moving, with demurest air,  
 To even-song, and vesper prayer.  
 Each arched porch, and entry low,  
 Was fill'd with patient folk and slow, 20  
 With whispers hush, and shuffling feet,  
 While play'd the organ loud and sweet.

The bells had ceas'd, the prayers begun,  
 And Bertha had not yet half done  
 A curious volume, patch'd and torn, 25  
 That all day long, from earliest morn,  
 Had taken captive her two eyes,  
 Among its golden broideries ;  
 Perplex'd her with a thousand things, —

---

\* It was believed that if a person, on St. Mark's Eve, placed himself near the church-porch when twilight was thickening, he would behold the apparition of those persons in the parish who were to be seized with any severe disease that year, go into the church. If they remained there it signified their death; if they came out again it portended their recovery; and the longer or shorter the time they remained in the building, the severer or less dangerous their illness. Infants, under age to walk, *rolled in*."

Rossetti pointed out that the choice of the locality of a "minster square" accorded with this tradition; and at a later date, on reading the Letters to Fanny Brawne, he wrote to me "I should think it very conceivable — nay, I will say, *to myself* highly probable and almost certain, — that the 'Poem which I have in my head' referred to by Keats at page 106 was none other than the fragmentary *Eve of St. Mark*. By the light of the extract . . . , I judge that the heroine — remorseful after trifling with a sick and now absent lover — might make her way to the minster-porch to learn his fate by the spell, and perhaps see his figure enter but not return." It appears that Mr. Theodore Watts, a very close student of Keats and most intimate friend of Rossetti, when made cognizant of this view, "was at once convinced of the great probability." Rossetti was re-reading the two volumes of *Life, Letters &c.* published in 1848, and saw nothing to qualify his view in the fact that *The Eve of St. Mark* was already begun when the letter quoted at the head of this note was written. He supposed that Keats "had had the poem for some time by him as a commencement," when he wrote to Fanny Brawne, "If my health would bear it, I could write a Poem which I have in my head, which would be a consolation for people in such a situation as mine. I would show some one in Love as I am, with a person living in such Liberty as you do." "Whether commenced or not with the view in question," writes Rossetti, "may be uncertain (though he must have *known* Miss B. when he wrote the Houghton letter); but he may (without even having at first intended it) have seen how well the scheme of the poem (which the superstition makes manifest enough) was fitted to work in with the ideas expressed in the Brawne letter."

**Cherubim and golden mice.**

Bertha was a maiden fair,  
Dwelling in th' old Minster-square ;  
From her fire-side she could see,  
Sidelong, its rich antiquity,  
Far as the Bishop's garden-wall ;  
Where sycamores and elm-trees tall,  
Full-leav'd, the forest had outstript,  
By no sharp north-wind ever nipt,  
So shelter'd by the mighty pile.  
Bertha arose, and read awhile,  
With forehead 'gainst the window-pane.  
Again she try'd, and then again,  
Until the dusk eve left her dark  
Upon the legend of St. Mark.  
From plaited lawn-frill, fine and thin,  
She lifted up her soft warm chin,  
With aching neck and swimming eyes,  
And daz'd with saintly imageries.

All was gloom, and silent all,  
Save now and then the still foot-fall  
Of one returning homewards late,  
Past the echoing minster-gate.  
The clamorous daws, that all the day  
Above tree-tops and towers play,  
Pair by pair had gone to rest,  
Each in its ancient belfry-nest,

---



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Where asleep they fall betimes,  
To music and the drowsy chimes. 65

All was silent, all was gloom,  
Abroad and in the homely room :  
Down she sat, poor cheated soul !  
And struck a lamp from the dismal coal ; 70  
Lean'd forward, with bright drooping hair  
And slant book, full against the glare.

Her shadow, in uneasy guise,  
Hover'd about, a giant size,  
On ceiling-beam and old oak chair, 75

The parrot's cage, and panel square ;  
And the warm angled winter-screen,  
On which were many monsters seen,  
Ca'll'd doves of Siam, Lima mice, 80  
And legless birds of Paradise,

Macaw, and tender Avadavat,  
And silken-furr'd Angora cat.  
Untir'd she read, her shadow still  
Glower'd about, as it would fill

The room with wildest forms and shades, 85  
As though some ghostly queen of spades  
Had come to mock behind her back,  
And dance, and ruffle her garments black.

Untir'd she read the legend page,  
Of holy Mark, from youth to age, 90  
On land, on sea, in pagan chains,  
Rejoicing for his many pains.

Sometimes the learned eremite,  
With golden star, or dagger bright,  
Referr'd to pious poesies 95

Written in smallest crow-quill size  
Beneath the text ; and thus the rhyme  
Was parcell'd out from time to time :

— " Als writth he of swevenis,  
Men han before they wake in bliss, 100  
Whanne that hir friendes thinke him bound  
In crimped shroude farre under grounde ;

And how a litling child mote be  
A saint er its nativitie,  
Gif that the modre (God her blesse !) 105  
Kepen in solitarinesse,  
And kissen devoute the holy croce.



Of Goddes love, and Sathan's force, —  
 He writth ; and things many mo  
 Of swiche things I may not show. 110  
 Bot I must tellen verillie  
 Somdel of Saintè Cicillie,  
 And chieffie what he auctorethe  
 Of Saintè Markis life and dethe : ”

At length her constant eyelids come 115  
 Upon the fervent martyrdom ;  
 Then lastly to his holy shrine,  
 Exalt amid the tapers' shine  
 At Venice, —

#### ODE TO FANNY.\*

##### 1.

PHYSICIAN Nature ! let my spirit blood !  
 O ease my heart of verse and let me rest ;  
 Throw me upon thy Tripod, till the flood  
 Of stifling numbers ebbs from my full breast.  
 A theme ! a theme ! great nature ! give a theme ;  
 Let me begin my dream.  
 I come — I see thee, as thou standest there,  
 Beckon me not into the wintry air.

##### 2.

Ah ! dearest love, sweet home of all my fears,  
 And hopes, and joys, and panting miseries, —

---

\* This poem was first given among the Literary Remains in 1848 without any date. The phase of feeling it represents was one of such frequent recurrence that, in the absence of direct evidence, no exact date can be assigned ; but it seems very likely that the early part of 1819 would be the time. The first letter to Miss Brawne from Shanklin, written on the 3rd of July, corresponds with this poem in tone and thought, and might tend to fix the date wrongly in the reader's mind, but if it be allowable to take the expression *wintry air* in stanza 1 literally, and to accept stanza 7 as indicating that the young couple had really but lately come to an understanding when the ode was written, the probability is that it was composed during his absence at Chichester in January — in contemplation of some New Year dance at Hampstead at which Miss Brawne was to be. I have never seen a manuscript of this poem ; but upon internal evidence I should be disposed to think that the word

To-night, if I may guess, thy beauty wears  
 A smile of such delight,  
 As brilliant and as bright,  
 As when with ravished, aching, vassal eyes,  
 Lost in soft amaze,  
 I gaze, I gaze !

3.

Who now, with greedy looks, eats up my feast?  
 What stare outfaces now my silver moon !  
 Ah ! keep that hand unravished at the least ;  
 Let, let, the amorous burn —  
 But, pr'ythee, do not turn  
 The current of your heart from me so soon,  
 O ! save, in charity,  
 The quickest pulse for me.

4.

Save it for me, sweet love ! though music breathe  
 Voluptuous visions into the warm air,  
 Though swimming through the dance's dangerous wreath ;  
 Be like an April day,  
 Smiling and cold and gay,  
 A temperate lilly, temperate as fair ;  
 Then, Heaven ! there will be  
 A warmer June for me.

5.

Why, this — you'll say, my Fanny ! is not true :  
 Put your soft hand upon your snowy side,  
 Where the heart beats : confess — 'tis nothing new —  
 Must not a woman be  
 A feather on the sea,  
 Sway'd to and fro by every wind and tide?  
 Of as uncertain speed  
 As blow-ball from the mead?

---

*not* in the last line of stanza 1 should be *out* ; that the last line but one of stanza 2 should be

Lost in a soft amaze,  
 and that the *a* has been dropped by accident.

## 6.

I know it — and to know it is despair  
 To one who loves you as I love, sweet Fanny!  
 Whose heart goes fluttering for you every where,  
 Nor, when away you roam,  
 Dare keep its wretched home,  
 Love, love alone, his pains severe and many:  
 Then, loveliest! keep me free,  
 From torturing jealousy.

## 7.

Ah! if you prize my subdu'd soul above  
 The poor, the fading, brief pride of an hour;  
 Let none profane my Holy See of love,  
 Or with a rude hand break  
 The sacramental cake:  
 Let none else touch the just new-budded flower;  
 If not — may my eyes close,  
 Love! on their lost repose.

## ODE ON INDOLENCE.\*

“They toil not, neither do they spin.”

## 1.

ONE morn before me were three figures seen,  
 With bowed necks, and joined hands, side-faced;  
 And one behind the other stepp'd serene,  
 In placid sandals, and in white robes graced;  
 They pass'd, like figures on a marble urn,  
 When shifted round to see the other side;  
 They came again; as when the urn once more  
 Is shifted round, the first seen shades return;  
 And they were strange to me, as may betide  
 With vases, to one deep in Phidian lore.

\* First given by Lord Houghton among the Literary Remains in 1848, with the date 1819. Among the many debts of these notes to the late Dante Gabriel Rossetti, I must not fail to record the indication of the following passage from Keats's letter begun on the 14th of February 1819 as anticipating the *Ode on Indolence*: —

## 2.

How is it, Shadows ! that I knew ye not?  
 How came ye muffled in so hush a mask?  
 Was it a silent deep-disguised plot  
 To steal away, and leave without a task  
 My idle days? Ripe was the drowsy hour;  
 The blissful cloud of summer-indolence  
 Benumb'd my eyes; my pulse grew less and less;  
 Pain had no sting, and pleasure's wreath no flower:  
 O, why did ye not melt, and leave my sense  
 Unhaunted quite of all but — nothingness?

## 3.

A third time pass'd they by, and, passing, turn'd  
 Each one the face a moment whiles to me;  
 Then faded, and to follow them I burn'd  
 And ach'd for wings, because I knew the three;  
 The first was a fair Maid, and Love her name;  
 The second was Ambition, pale of cheek,  
 And ever watchful with fatigued eye;  
 The last, whom I love more, the more of blame  
 Is heap'd upon her, maiden most unmeek, —  
 I knew to be my demon Poesy.

## 4.

They faded, and, forsooth ! I wanted wings:  
 O folly ! What is love? and where is it?

---

" This morning I am in a sort of temper, indolent and supremely careless; I long after a stanza or two of Thomson's 'Castle of Indolence;' my passions are all asleep, from my having slumbered till nearly eleven, and weakened the animal fibre all over me, to a delightful sensation, about three degrees on this side of faintness. If I had teeth of pearl, and the breath of lillies, I should call it languor; but, as I am, I must call it laziness. In this state of effeminacy, the fibres of the brain are relaxed, in common with the rest of the body, and to such a happy degree, that pleasure has no show of enticement, and pain no unbearable frown; neither Poetry, nor Ambition, nor Love, have any alertness of countenance; as they pass by me, they seem rather like three figures on a Greek vase, two men and a woman, whom no one but myself could distinguish in their disguise. This is the only happiness, and is a rare instance of advantage in the body overpowering the mind."

The date under which this passage occurs in the journal letter is the 19th of March. It seems almost certain therefore that the Ode must have been composed after the fragment of *The Eve of St. Mark*, — not before it as usually given.

## 5.

And once more came they by; — alas! wherefore?  
 My sleep had been embroider'd with dim dreams  
 My soul had been a lawn besprinkled o'er  
 With flowers, and stirring shades, and baffled be:  
 The morn was clouded, but no shower fell,  
 Tho' in her lids hung the sweet tears of May;  
 The open casement press'd a new-leav'd vine,  
 Let in the budding warmth and throstle's lay;  
 O Shadows! 'twas a time to bid farewell!  
 Upon your skirts had fallen no tears of mine.

## 6.

So, ye three Ghosts, adieu! Ye cannot raise  
 My head cool-bedded in the flowery grass;  
 For I would not be dieted with praise,  
 A pet-lamb in a sentimental farce!  
 Fade softly from my eyes, and be once more  
 In masque-like figures on the dreamy urn;  
 Farewell! I yet have visions for the night,  
 And for the day faint visions there is store;  
 Vanish, ye Phantoms! from my idle spright,  
 Into the clouds, and never more return!

---

6) It is no doubt owing to the want of opportunity to revise that this beautiful stanza comes down to us disfigured by the bad rt  
ce.

## SONNET.\*

WHY did I laugh to-night? No voice will tell:  
 No God, no Demon of severe response,  
 Deigns to reply from Heaven or from Hell.  
 Then to my human heart I turn at once.  
 Heart! Thou and I are here sad and alone;  
 I say, why did I laugh? O mortal pain!  
 O Darkness! Darkness! ever must I moan,  
 To question Heaven and Hell and Heart in vain.  
 Why did I laugh? I know this Being's lease,  
 My fancy to its utmost blisses spreads;  
 Yet would I on this very midnight cease,  
 And the world's gaudy ensigns see in shreds;  
 Verse, Fame, and Beauty are intense indeed,  
 But Death intenser — Death is Life's high meed.

## SONNET.†

A DREAM, AFTER READING DANTE'S EPISODE OF PAULO AND  
 FRANCESCA.

AS Hermes once took to his feathers light,  
 When lulled Argus, baffled, swoon'd and slept,  
 So on a Delphic reed, my idle spright  
 So play'd, so charm'd, so conquer'd, so bereft  
 The dragon-world of all its hundred eyes;  
 And, seeing it asleep, so fled away —

\* This sonnet, first given in the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848), was probably composed between the 19th of March and the 15th of April 1819, as it formed part of the journal letter referred to in the note to the preceding poem, and was given immediately before a new division bearing the later date. Keats says he had intended not to send the Sonnet to George and his wife, on account of their anxieties about his temperament; but he refers to other passages in his letter as "the best comment" on the sonnet, and ends the subject with a triumphant "I went to bed and enjoyed uninterrupted sleep: sane I went to bed, and sane I arose." A man might well go to bed sane after writing the final couplet, which is in a thoroughly self-contained and contemplative vein — strangely so for the end of such a bitter series of "obstinate questionings."

† This beautiful Sonnet seems to have been written originally in the first volume of the miniature Cary's Dante which Keats carried through Scotland in his knapsack; and the composition should probably be assigned to the early part of April 1819. There is a fair transcript written on one of the blank leaves at the end of the copy

Not to pure Ida with its snow-cold skies,  
 Nor unto Tempe where Jove griev'd a day;  
 But to that second circle of sad hell,  
 Where 'mid the gust, the whirlwind, and the flaw  
 Of rain and hail-stones, lovers need not tell  
 Their sorrows. Pale were the sweet lips I saw,  
 Pale were the lips I kiss'd, and fair the form  
 I floated with, about that melancholy storm.

of *Endymion* in Sir Charles Dilke's possession. The sonnet was published over the signature "Caviare" in *The Indicator* for the 28th of June 1820. Inside the recto cover of the little *Inferno* Keats began by writing the words *Amid a thousand*; and he then seems to have turned the book round for a fresh start; for inside the verso cover he has written —

Full in the midst of bloomless hours my } spright  
 soul  
 Seeing one night the dragon world asleep  
 Arose like Hermes...

The sonnet is finally written in a cramped manner on the last end-paper, and is almost identical with the fair copy; but it shows the cancelled seventh line

But not olympus-ward to serene skies...

though finally agreeing with the other copy in reading *Not to pure Ida*, instead of *Not unto Ida* as *The Indicator* reads. Both manuscripts read *that day* instead of *a day* in line 8; but I do not doubt that Keats revised the line, to avoid the repetition of *that* in line 9, when he gave the sonnet to Hunt. It will be remembered that the young poet was present at the making up of that number of the elder poet's periodical, for, in No. 36 of *Leigh Hunt's London Journal* (December 3, 1834), by way of footnote to a quotation from Keats in *A "Now;" Descriptive of a Cold Day*, Hunt says, referring to the very number containing the sonnet,—"Mr. Keats gave us some touches in our account of the 'Hot Day' (first published in the '*Indicator*' as we sat writing it, in his company thirteen or fourteen years back." On this evidence I do not hesitate to adopt also the reading *'mid* for *in* in line 10, and some details of punctuation. The mis-spelling *world-round* for *whirlwind* in the same line in *The Indicator* is certainly much more like Keats than Hunt, but of course accidental. I presume the copy of the poem sent to George Keats is still in America: in the letter embodying it, published by Lord Houghton in the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848), Keats gives a graphic account of the dream, in prose. See the Letter in this edition, under date the 15th of April 1819. It is worth while to record that Dante Gabriel Rossetti, writing to me concerning the false rhyme *slept* and *bereft*, characterized this as "by far the finest of Keats's sonnets (mostly very faulty or inferior) besides that on Chapman's Homer. This anomaly," added Rossetti, "is all the more curious when we consider the sort of echo it gives of a line in *Endymion*,

So sad, so melancholy, so bereft."

The line will be found at page 135. The strangeness of the omission to find out the fault in the rhyme is further enhanced when we consider how many times Keats must have written the sonnet over. This place must serve me to state that Rossetti qualified his estimate of the sonnets in a later letter by informing me that on further examination he found there were fourteen "more or less worthy of him." I should have said more than fourteen, and had looked forward with interest to a comparison of notes we were to have had; but alas! the great artist's untimely death intervened.

SPENSERIAN STANZAS ON CHARLES ARMITAGE BROWN.

1.

HE is to weet a melancholy carle :  
 Thin in the waist, with bushy head of hair,  
 As hath the seeded thistle, when a parle  
 It holds with Zephyr, ere it sendeth fair  
 Its light balloons into the summer air ;  
 Thereto his beard had not begun to bloom,  
 No brush had touched his chin, or razor sheer ;  
 No care had touched his cheek with mortal doom,  
 But new he was, and bright, as scarf from Persian loom.

2.

Ne cared he for wine or half-and-half ;  
 Ne cared he for fish, or flesh, or fowl ;  
 And sauces held he worthless as the chaff ;  
 He 'sdeigned the swine-head at the wassail-bowl ;  
 Ne with lewd ribbalds sat he cheek by jowl ;  
 Ne with sly lemans in the scorner's chair ;  
 But after water-brooks this pilgrim's soul  
 Panted, and all his food was woodland air ;  
 Though he would oft-times feast on gilliflowers rare.

3.

The slang of cities in no wise he knew,  
*Tipping the wink* to him was heathen Greek ;  
 He sipp'd no " olden Tom," or " ruin blue,"  
 Or Nantz, or cherry-brandy, drank full meek  
 By many a damsel brave, and rouge of cheek ;  
 Nor did he know each aged watchman's beat,  
 Nor in obscured purlieus would he seek  
 For curled Jewesses, with ankles neat,  
 Who, as they walk abroad, make tinkling with their feet.

---

It is a brusque transition from the fervour and preternatural beauty of the dream sonnet to these amusing stanzas on Brown ; but under the same date as that on which Keats told his brother of the dream, namely the 15th of April 1819, he records that " Brown, this morning, is writing some Spenserian stanzas against " Miss Brawne and the poet ; " so," says the poet, " I shall amuse myself with him a little, in the manner of Spenser." It would not be fair to assume that all here is ironical ; but the first stanza suggests that Keats's estimable friend was a " jolly " man, bald-headed, and " a trifle wider in the waist than formerly ;" while, generally, one would suppose him to have been alive to the good things of the world.



To fit the naked foot of Poesy;  
Let us inspect the Lyre, and weigh the stress  
Of every chord, and see what may be gain'd  
By ear industrious, and attention meet;  
Misers of sound and syllable, no less  
Than Midas of his coinage, let us be  
Jealous of dead leaves in the bay wreath cro  
So, if we may not let the Muse be free,  
She will be bound with garlands of her own.

SONG OF FOUR FAERIES,†

FIRE, AIR, EARTH, AND WATER,

SALAMANDER, ZEPHYR, DUSKETHA, AND BRE

*Salamander.*

HAPPY, happy glowing fire!

*Zephyr.*

Fragrant air! delicious light!

---

\* This experiment in sonnet metre appears to have been written before the 3rd of May 1819, and was first given in the *Life, Letter* as the last poem transcribed in the journal letter to George Keaton on the 14th of February and ended on the 3rd of May, and starts with the words "This is the third of May," and under the following "I have been endeavouring to discover a better Sonnet stanza which is legitimate does not suit the language well, from the pounce which appears too elegiac, and the couplet at the end of it has an



*Dusketha.*

Let me to my glooms retire !

*Breama.*

I to green-weed rivers bright !

*Salamander.*

Happy, happy glowing fire ! 5  
Dazzling bowers of soft retire,  
Ever let my nourish'd wing,  
Like a bat's, still wandering,  
Faintly fan your fiery spaces,  
Spirit sole in deadly places. 10  
In unhaunted roar and blaze,  
Open eyes that never daze,  
Let me see the myriad shapes  
Of men, and beasts, and fish, and apes,  
Portray'd in many a fiery den, 15  
And wrought by spumy bitumen.  
On the deep intenser roof,  
Arched every way aloof,  
Let me breathe upon their skies,  
And anger their live tapestries ; 20  
Free from cold, and every care,  
Of chilly rain, and shivering air.

*Zephyr.*

Spirit of Fire ! away ! away !  
Or your very roundelay  
Will sear my plumage newly budded 25  
From its quilled sheath, all studded  
With the self-same dews that fell  
On the May-grown Asphodel.  
Spirit of Fire — away ! away !

*Breama.*

Spirit of Fire — away ! away ! 30  
Zephyr, blue-ey'd Faery, turn,  
And see my cool sedge-bury'd urn,  
Where it rests its mossy brim

*Zephyr.*

Gentle Breama! by the first  
Violet young nature nurst,  
I will bathe myself with thee,  
So you sometimes follow me  
To my home, far, far, in west,  
Beyond the nimble-wheeled quest  
Of the golden-browed sun:  
Come with me, o'er tops of trees,  
To my fragrant palaces,  
Where they ever floating are  
Beneath the cherish of a star  
Call'd Vesper, who with silver veil  
Ever hides his brilliance pale.  
Ever gently-drows'd doth keep  
Twilight for the Fayses to sleep.  
Fear not that your watery hair  
Will thirst in drouthy ringlets there;  
Clouds of stored summer rains  
Thou shalt taste, before the stains  
Of the mountain soil they take,  
And too unlucent for thee make.  
I love thee, crystal Faery, true!  
Sooth I am as sick for you!

*Salamander.*

Out, ye aguish Faeries, out!  
Chilly lovers, what a rout  
Keep ye with your frozen breath,  
Colder than the mortal death



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Dusketha, so enchantingly  
Freckle-wing'd and lizard-sided!

*Dusketha.*

By thee, Sprite, will I be guided! 75  
I care not for cold or heat;  
Frost and flame, or sparks, or sleet,  
To my essence are the same; —  
But I honour more the flame.  
Sprite of Fire, I follow thee 80  
Wheresoever it may be,  
To the torrid spouts and fountains,  
Underneath earth-quaked mountains;  
Or, at thy supreme desire,  
Touch the very pulse of fire 85  
With my bare unlidged eyes.

*Salamander.*

Sweet Dusketha! paradise!  
Off, ye icy Spirits, fly!  
Frosty creatures of the sky!

*Dusketha.*

Breathe upon them, fiery sprite! 90

*Zephyr and Breama.*

Away! away to our delight!

*Salamander.*

Go, feed on icicles, while we  
Bedded in tongue-flames will be.

*Dusketha.*

Lead me to those feverous glooms,  
Sprite of Fire!

*Breama.*

Me to the blooms,  
Blue-ey'd Zephyr, of those flowers

Far in the west where the May-cloud lowers ;  
 And the beams of still Vesper, when winds are all wist,  
 Are shed thro' the rain and the milder mist,  
 And twilight your floating bowers.

100

## TWO SONNETS ON FAME.\*

## I.

FAME, like a wayward girl, will still be coy  
 To those who woo her with too slavish knees,  
 But makes surrender to some thoughtless boy,  
 And dotes the more upon a heart at ease ;  
 She is a Gipsy, will not speak to those  
 Who have not learnt to be content without her ;  
 A Jilt, whose ear was never whisper'd close,  
 Who thinks they scandal her who talk about her ;  
 A very Gipsy is she, Nilus-born,  
 Sister-in-law to jealous Potiphar ;  
 Ye love-sick Bards, repay her scorn for scorn,  
 Ye Artists lovelorn, madmen that ye are !  
 Make your best bow to her and bid adieu,  
 Then, if she likes it, she will follow you.

## II.

"You cannot eat your cake and have it too." — *Proverb.*

HOW fever'd is the man, who cannot look  
 Upon his mortal days with temperate blood,  
 Who vexes all the leaves of his life's book,  
 And robs his fair name of its maidenhood ;  
 It is as if the rose should pluck herself,  
 Or the ripe plum finger its misty bloom,  
 As if a Naiad, like a meddling elf,  
 Should darken her pure grot with muddy gloom,

\* Both these sonnets were given among the Literary Remains in the *Life, Letters &c.*, with the date 1819, which they also bear in the manuscript at the end of Sir Charles Dilke's copy of *Endymion*. This manuscript shows no variation beyond a few stops.

But the rose leaves herself upon the briar,  
 For winds to kiss and grateful bees to feed,  
 And the ripe plum still wears its dim attire,  
     The undisturbed lake has crystal space,  
 Why then should man, teasing the world for grace,  
 Spoil his salvation for a fierce miscreed?

## SONNET TO SLEEP.\*

O SOFT embalmer of the still midnight,  
 Shutting with careful fingers and benign,  
 Our gloom-pleas'd eyes, embower'd from the light,  
 Enshaded in forgetfulness divine :  
 O soothest Sleep ! if so it please thee, close,  
 In midst of this thine hymn, my willing eyes,

---

\* This sonnet was first given by Lord Houghton among the Literary Remains in 1848. Keats appears to have drafted twelve lines of it in the copy of Milton's *Paradise Lost* which he annotated and gave to Mr. and Mrs. Dilke; and there is a complete fair manuscript dated 1819 in Sir Charles Dilke's copy of *Endymion*. The text as given above accords entirely with the fair manuscript, save that I have adopted Lord Houghton's reading *lulling* for *dewy* in line 8, as probably from another and later manuscript. The draft, which was published in *The Athenaeum* for the 26th of October 1872, reads finally thus (I transcribe directly from the manuscript) : —

O soft embalmer of the still Midnight  
 Shutting with careful fingers and benign  
 Our gloom pleas'd eyes embowered from the light  
 As wearisome as darkness is divine  
 O soothest sleep, if so it please thee close  
 My willing eyes in midst of this thine hymn  
 Or wait the amen, ere thy poppy throws  
 Its sweet-death dews o'er every pulse and limb —  
 Then shut the hushed Casket of my soul  
 And turn the key round in the oiled wards  
 And let it rest until the morn has stole,  
 Bright tressed From the grey east's shuddering bourn...

There is a cancelled opening for line 4, *Of sun or teasing candles*; in line 6 *Miné* has been but imperfectly altered to *My*; in line 11 the words *has stole* are struck through, but without anything being substituted for them; and of line 12 there is an incomplete cancelled reading —

From the west's shuddering bourn...

Though the manuscript is a little blotty there is but one word about which there is any doubt, namely the compound *sweet-death*; and I have no serious doubt as to that; but literally it looks like *sweet-dath*, the *a* however having the appearance of an *e* and an *a* run together. The hyphen between *sweet* and *death* should perhaps be between *death* and *dews*; and in line 11 of the text the word *lords* should probably be *boards*, from which Keats would not have been unlikely to drop the *a*. That



A winding-sheet, ah me ! I must away  
 To No. 7, just beyond the circus gay.  
 ' Alas, my friend ! your coat sits very well ;  
 Where may your tailor live ? ' ' I may not tell.  
 O pardon me — I'm absent now and then. 20  
 Where might my tailor live ? I say again  
 I cannot tell, let me no more be teas'd —  
 He lives in Wapping, *might* live where he pleas'd.'

## SONNET.\*

THE day is gone, and all its sweets are gone !  
 Sweet voice, sweet lips, soft hand, and softer breast,  
 Warm breath, light whisper, tender semi-tone,  
 Bright eyes, accomplish'd shape, and lang'rous waist !  
 Faded the flower and all its budded charms,  
 Faded the sight of beauty from my eyes,  
 Faded the shape of beauty from my arms,  
 Faded the voice, warmth, whiteness, paradise —  
 Vanish'd unseasonably at shut of eve,  
 When the dusk holiday — or holineight  
 Of fragrant-curtain'd love begins to weave  
 The woof of darkness thick, for hid delight ;  
 But, as I've read love's missal through to-day,  
 He'll let me sleep, seeing I fast and pray.

## LINES TO FANNY.†

WHAT can I do to drive away  
 Remembrance from my eyes ? for they have seen,  
 Aye, an hour ago, my brilliant Queen !  
 Touch has a memory. O say, love, say,

(19) In *The World* we read *Taylor*, with a capital T, both here and in line 21, as if Keats were thinking of his publisher; but I doubt whether that pleasantry was intentional, because I cannot see any point or meaning in it; and I think Keats was quite capable of spelling the common noun *tailor* in that fashion without any *arrière pensée*.

\* This sonnet was first given among the Literary Remains in 1848, with the date 1819. There is a letter to Miss Brawne posted on the 11th of October at Westminster, which corresponds with the sonnet in subject; so that this poem may very well belong to the 10th of October 1819.

† These lines, first given in the *Life, Letters &c.*, were there dated October 1819;



Whither I bent her force,  
Unintellectual, yet divine to me ; —  
Divine, I say ! — What sea-bird o'er the sea  
Is a philosopher the while he goes  
Winging along where the great water throes ?

How shall I do  
To get anew  
Those moulted feathers, and so mount once more  
Above, above  
The reach of fluttering Love,  
And make him cower lowly while I soar ?  
Shall I gulp wine ? No, that is vulgarism,  
A heresy and schism,  
Foisted into the canon law of love ; —  
No, — wine is only sweet to happy men ;  
More dismal cares  
Seize on me unawares, —  
Where shall I learn to get my peace again ?  
To banish thoughts of that most hateful land,  
Dungeoner of my friends, that wicked strand  
Where they were wreck'd and live a wrecked life ;  
That monstrous region, whose dull rivers pour,  
Ever from their sordid urns unto the shore,  
Unown'd of any weedy-haired gods ;

---

! I should be disposed to assign them to the 12th of that month  
at on which Keats posted a letter at Westminster to Miss Brav  
r that he has set himself to copy some verses out fair, and ad  
ceed with any degree of content. I must write you a line or two  
assist in dismissing you from my Mind for ever so short a ti



*POSTHUMOUS AND FUGITIVE POEMS.* 445

Whose winds, all zephyrless, hold scourging rods,  
Ic'd in the great lakes, to afflict mankind ;  
Whose rank-grown forests, frosted, black, and blind,  
Would fright a Dryad ; whose harsh herbag'd meads 40  
Make lean and lank the starv'd ox while he feeds ;  
There bad flowers have no scent, birds no sweet song,  
And great unerring Nature once seems wrong.

O, for some sunny spell  
To dissipate the shadows of this hell ! 45  
Say they are gone, — with the new dawning light  
Steps forth my lady bright !

O, let me once more rest  
My soul upon that dazzling breast !  
Let once again these aching arms be plac'd, 50  
The tender gaolers of thy waist !

And let me feel that warm breath here and there  
To spread a rapture in my very hair, —  
O, the sweetness of the pain !  
Give me those lips again ! 55  
Enough ! Enough ! it is enough for me  
To dream of thee !

SONNET TO FANNY.\*

**I** CRY your mercy — pity — love ! — aye, love !  
Merciful love that tantalizes not,  
One-thoughted, never-wandering, guileless love,  
Unmask'd, and being seen — without a blot !  
O ! let me have thee whole, — all — all — be mine !  
That shape, that fairness, that sweet minor zest  
Of love, your kiss, — those hands, those eyes divine,  
That warm, white, lucent, million-pleasur'd breast, —  
Yourself — your soul — in pity give me all,  
Withhold no atom's atom or I die,  
Or living on perhaps, your wretched thrall,  
Forget, in the mist of idle misery,  
Life's purposes, — the palate of my mind  
Losing its gust, and my ambition blind !

---

\* First given among the *Literary Remains* in 1848, dated 1819. I have no data upon which to suggest the period more exactly ; but the desperation of tone may perhaps indicate that the sonnet was composed late in the year.

## SONNET TO GEORGE KEATS:\*

WRITTEN IN SICKNESS.

**B**ROTHER belov'd if health shall smile again,  
 Upon this wasted form and fever'd cheek :  
 If e'er returning vigour bid these weak  
 And languid limbs their gladsome strength regain,  
 Well may thy brow the placid glow retain  
 Of sweet content and thy pleas'd eye may speak  
 The conscious self applause, but should I seek  
 To utter what this heart can feel, Ah ! vain  
 Were the attempt ! Yet kindest friends while o'er  
 My couch ye bend, and watch with tenderness  
 The being whom your cares could e'en restore,  
 From the cold grasp of Death, say can you guess  
 The feelings which these lips can ne'er express ;  
 Feelings, deep fix'd in grateful memory's store.

## LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCI.†

I.

**A**H, what can ail thee, wretched wight,  
 Alone and palely loitering ;  
 The sedge is wither'd from the lake,  
 And no birds sing.

\* This sonnet is from a transcript in the handwriting of George Keats, which bears the date 1819; but I am disposed to think this date must have been wrongly affixed from memory. The entire absence of high poetic feeling indicates a time of utter physical prostration; and I should imagine that the sonnet might possibly have been written in February 1820, when Keats was still so ill as to be forbidden to write, and that it might have been sent to George with the announcement of the illness; but it seems likelier that it was composed later on in the year, in reply to some letter written by George on receiving that news—a letter in which the younger brother might have reproached himself for leaving the elder, low in health and funds, and for rushing back to America to mend his own fortunes.

† This poem was first published by Leigh Hunt in *The Indicator* for the 10th of May 1820 (No. XXXI), with some introductory remarks which will be found in the Appendix. The signature used by Keats on this occasion, as on that of issuing the Sonnet on a Dream (page 433) was "Caviare." In 1848 Lord Houghton gave the poem among the Literary Remains, apparently from a manuscript source, for the variations are very considerable. I think there can be no doubt that the *Indicator* version is a revision of the other, and I have therefore adopted it in the

## 2.

Ah, what can ail thee, wretched wight,  
 So haggard and so woe-begone?  
 The squirrel's granary is full,  
 And the harvest's done.

## 3.

I see a lilly on thy brow,  
 With anguish moist and fever dew;  
 And on thy cheek a fading rose  
 Fast withereth too.

## 4.

I met a lady in the meads  
 Full beautiful, a faery's child;  
 Her hair was long, her foot was light,  
 And her eyes were wild.

## 5.

I set her on my pacing steed,  
 And nothing else saw all day long;  
 For sideways would she lean, and sing  
 A faery's song.

## 6.

I made a garland for her head,  
 And bracelets too, and fragrant zone;  
 She look'd at me as she did love,  
 . And made sweet moan.

text, noting the variations as of the highest interest. In one of the late Gabriel Rossetti's letters he characterizes this poem as "the wondrous *Belle Dame sans Merci*." I have no positive information as to the date at which it was composed; but I am fain to regard it as a crowning essay in perfect imaginative utterance, written between the poet's partial recovery and his departure to seek health and find a grave in Italy.

(1-2) The first line in each of these stanzas is, in Lord Houghton's version,  
 O what can ail thee, knight-at-arms,

and in line 3 of stanza 1 *As* stands for *is*.

(3) Lord Houghton reads *cheeks* in line 3 of stanza 3.

(5) This and the next stanza are transposed in the other version; and in the third line we read *sidelong would she bend*. The reading of the text probably arose from the desire to avoid the repetition of *long*.

8.

She took me to her elfin grot,  
And there she gaz'd and sighed deep,  
And there I shut her wild sad eyes —  
So kiss'd to sleep.

9.

And there we slumber'd on the moss,  
And there I dream'd, ah woe betide,  
The latest dream I ever dream'd  
On the cold hill side.

10.

I saw pale kings, and princes too,  
Pale warriors, death-pale were they all  
Who cry'd — “ La belle Dame sans mert  
Hath thee in thrall ! ”

11.

I saw their starv'd lips in the gloom  
With horrid warning gaped wide,  
And I awoke, and found me here  
On the cold hill side.

---

(8-9) In Lord Houghton's version —

She took me to her elfin grot,  
And there she wept, and sigh'd full sore,  
And there I shut her wild wild eyes  
With kisses four.

## 12.

And this is why I sojourn here  
 Alone and palely loitering,  
 Though the sedge is wither'd from the lake,  
 And no birds sing.

## SONNET.\*

WRITTEN ON A BLANK PAGE IN SHAKESPEARE'S POEMS, FACING "A  
 LOVER'S COMPLAINT."

**B**RIGHT star, would I were steadfast as thou art —  
 Not in lone splendour hung aloft the night  
 And watching, with eternal lids apart,  
 Like nature's patient, sleepless Eremite,  
 The moving waters at their priestlike task  
 Of pure ablution round earth's human shores,  
 Or gazing on the new soft-fallen mask  
 Of snow upon the mountains and the moors —

*Indicator* in favour of its rejection by Keats; — for Hunt may have made that small change. There is a graphic value in the strained use of *gloom* for *gloaming* which counterbalances its grammatical laxity; and it certainly exceeds the more ordinary word *gloom* in poetic intensity.

\* Lord Houghton records that, after Keats had embarked for Italy he "landed once more in England, on the Dorsetshire coast, after a weary fortnight spent in beating about the Channel; the bright beauty of the day and the scene revived the poet's drooping heart, and the inspiration remained on him for some time even after his return to the ship. It was then that he composed that sonnet of solemn tenderness,

'Bright star I would I were steadfast as thou art,' &c.

and wrote it out in a copy of Shakespeare's Poems he had given to Severn a few days before. I know of nothing written afterwards."

The copy of Shakespeare's Poetical Works had been given to Keats by John Hamilton Reynolds, and is now in the possession of Sir Charles Dilke. It is a royal 8vo volume "printed for Thomas Wilson, No. 10, London-House-yard, St. Paul's," in 1806; and this sonnet, of which a fac-simile is here given, is written upon the verso of the fly-title to *A Lover's Complaint*. It seems fair to assume that the reason of its being so high up on the page is that it thus faces a space of equal size containing no words except the boldly printed heading of Shakespeare's poem, *A Lover's Complaint*, as if in that mournful moment Keats desired to appropriate to his last poetic utterance a style and title already immortal. Lord Houghton gives a variant of the last line —

Half-passionless, and so swoon on to death.

As there is no trace of this in the Shakespeare, there must have been another manuscript — perhaps a pencilled draft — and it is to be presumed that the words *fali*

reading of the Shakespeare, being in that case an error of transcription. The date of the poem is about the end of September or beginning of 1820. It was published in February 1846, with a letter from *Ser Magazine*.



## OTHO THE GREAT:

A TRAGEDY, IN FIVE ACTS.

[Keats and Brown went to the Isle of Wight for a summer sojourn in 1819; and during the months of July and August the following tragedy was written at intervals under very peculiar conditions. They are thus described by Brown in a note given by Lord Houghton in the Aldine edition of 1876:— “ At Shanklin he undertook a difficult task; I engaged to furnish him with the title, characters, and dramatic conduct of a tragedy, and he was to enwrap it in poetry. The progress of this work was curious, for while I sat opposite to him, he caught my description of each scene entire, with the characters to be brought forward, the events, and everything connected with it. Thus he went on, scene after scene, never knowing nor inquiring into the scene which was to follow, until four acts were completed. It was then he required to know at once all the events that were to occupy the fifth act; I explained them to him, but, after a patient hearing and some thought, he insisted that many incidents in it were too humorous, or, as he termed them, too melodramatic. He wrote the fifth act in accordance with his own views, and so contented was I with his poetry that at the time, and for a long time after, I thought he was in the right.” There are numerous references to this undertaking in Keats’s letters; but one in particular should be quoted here. It is in a letter to Mr. Dilke dated, “ Shanklin, August 2, 1819,” and is as follows:— “ Brown and I are pretty well harnessed again to our dog-cart. I mean the tragedy, which goes on sinkingly. We are thinking of introducing an elephant, but have not historical reference within reach to determine as to Otho’s menagerie. When Brown first mentioned this I took it for a joke; however, he brings such plausible reasons, and discourses so eloquently on the dramatic effect, that I am giving it a serious consideration.” In *The Papers of a Critic* (1875), Volume I, page 9, Sir Charles Dilke gives the following extract from a letter dated August 12 1819, from Brown, in the Isle of Wight, to Mr. Dilke: — “ Keats is very industrious, but I swear by the prompter’s whistle, and by the bangs of stage-doors, he is obstinately monstrous. What think you of Otho’s threatening cold pig to the newly-married



couple? He says the Emperor must have a spice of drollery. His introduction of Grimm's adventure, lying three days on his back for love, though it spoils the unity of time, is not out of the way for the character of Ludolf, so I have consented to it; but I cannot endure his fancy of making the princess blow up her hairdresser, for smearing her cheek with pomatum and spoiling her rouge. It may be natural, as he observes, but so might many things. However, such as it is, it has advanced to nearly the end of the fourth act." The late Joseph Severn possessed an autograph manuscript of this play, from which he was in the habit of giving away pieces as specimens of Keats's writing. After his death there were still many leaves entire — a small portion of Act I, the greater part of scene II, Act IV, and most of Act V. I have collated these portions with the printed text, adopted some readings, and noted others, as will be seen. The exact order in which this tragedy and the two fragments of *King Stephen* and *The Cap and Bells* should be arranged in regard to the latest of Keats's other posthumous poems cannot, I imagine, be determined. Having regard to this circumstance and the entire difference of form and matter from what is characteristic of Keats, I have thought it well to place these three essays last, rather than disturb the sequence of those poems which are more representative, though of course the sonnet written in Shakespeare's Poems, at all events, was later than either of these three tentative pieces. — H. B. F.]



DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

OTHO THE GREAT, *Emperor of Germany.*

LUDOLPH, *his Son.*

CONRAD, *Duke of Franconia.*

ALBERT, *a Knight, favoured by Otho.*

SIGIFRED, *an Officer, friend of Ludolph.*

THEODORE, } *Officers.*

GONFRED, }

ETHELBERT, *an Abbot.*

GERSA, *Prince of Hungary.*

*An Hungarian Captain.*

*Physician.*

*Page.*

*Nobles, Knights, Attendants, and Soldiers.*

ERMINIA, *Niece of Otho.*

AURANTHE, *Conrad's Sister.*

*Ladies and Attendants.*

SCENE. *The Castle of Friedburg, its vicinity, and the  
Hungarian Camp.*

TIME. *One day.*

(453)

ACT I.

SCENE I. — *An Apartment in the Castle. Enter*

CONRAD.

SO, I am safe emerged from these broils!  
Amid the wreck of thousands I am whole;  
For every crime I have a laurel-wreath,  
For every lie a lordship. Nor yet has  
My ship of fortune furl'd her silken sails, —  
Let her glide on! This danger'd neck is saved,  
By dexterous policy, from the rebel's axe;  
And of my ducal palace not one stone  
Is bruised by the Hungarian petards.  
Toil hard, ye slaves, and from the miser-earth  
Bring forth once more my bullion, treasured deep,  
With all my jewell'd salvers, silver and gold,  
And precious goblets that make rich the wine.  
But why do I stand babbling to myself?  
Where is Auranthe? I have news for her  
Shall —

*Enter AURANTHE.*

AURANTHE.

Conrad! what tidings? Good, if I may get  
From your alert eyes and high-lifted brows.  
What tidings of the battle? Albert? Ludolph? Otl

CONRAD.



AURANTHE.

So serious?

CONRAD.

Yes, so serious, that before  
I utter even the shadow of a hint  
Concerning what will make that sin-worn cheek  
Blush joyous blood through every lineament,      25  
You must make here a solemn vow to me.

AURANTHE.

I prythee, Conrad, do not overact  
The hypocrite — what vow would you impose?

CONRAD.

Trust me for once, — that you may be assur'd      30  
'Tis not confiding to a broken reed,  
A poor Court-bankrupt, outwitted and lost,  
Revolve these facts in your acutest mood,  
In such a mood as now you listen to me: —  
A few days since, I was an open rebel      35  
Against the Emperor, had suborn'd his son,  
Drawn off his nobles to revolt, and shown  
Contented fools causes for discontent  
Fresh hatch'd in my ambition's eagle nest —  
So thriv'd I as a rebel, and behold      40  
Now I am Otho's favourite, his dear friend,  
His right hand, his brave Conrad.

AURANTHE.

I confess  
You have intrigu'd with these unsteady times  
To admiration; but to be a favourite —

CONRAD.

I saw my moment. The Hungarians,      45  
Collected silently in holes and corners,

(23-44) The first of the manuscript fragments referred to at page 452 begins with Conrad's speech, line 23, and ends with line 44.

(33) Cancelled manuscript reading, *Let me impress this.*

AURANTHE.

So far yourself. But what is this to me  
More than that I am glad? I gratulate you.

CONRAD.

Yes, sister, but it does regard you greatly,  
Nearly, momentarily, — aye, painfully!  
Make me this vow —

AURANTHE.

Concerning whom or what

CONRAD.

Albert!

AURANTHE.

I would inquire somewhat of him:  
You had a letter from me touching him?  
No treason 'gainst his head in deed or word!  
Surely you spar'd him at my earnest prayer?  
Give me the letter — it should not exist!

CONRAD.

At one pernicious charge of the enemy,  
I, for a moment-whiles, was prisoner ta'en  
And rifled, — stuff! the horses' hoofs have minc'd it

AURANTHE.

...



SCENE I.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

457

And cloud him in such utter banishment, 70  
That when his person meets again your eye,  
Your vision shall quite lose its memory,  
And wander past him as through vacancy.

AURANTHE.

I'll not be perjured.

CONRAD.

No, nor great, nor mighty; 75  
You would not wear a crown, or rule a kingdom.  
To you it is indifferent.

AURANTHE.

What means this?

CONRAD.

You'll not be perjured! Go to Albert then,  
That camp-mushroom — dishonour of our house.  
Go, page his dusty heels upon a march,  
Furbish his jingling baldrick while he sleeps, 80  
And share his mouldy ration in a siege.  
Yet stay, — perhaps a charm may call you back,  
And make the widening circlets of your eyes  
Sparkle with healthy fevers. — The Emperor  
Hath given consent that you should marry Ludolph! 85

AURANTHE.

Can it be, brother? For a golden crown  
With a queen's awful lips I doubly thank you!  
This is to wake in Paradise! Farewell  
Thou clod of yesterday — 'twas not myself!  
Not till this moment did I ever feel 90  
My spirit's faculties! I'll flatter you  
For this, and be you ever proud of it;  
Thou, Jove-like, struck'st thy forehead,  
And from the teeming marrow of thy brain  
I spring complete Minerva! But the prince — 95  
His highness Ludolph — where is he?

---

(93) I presume this line was left thus formless and incomplete by Keats.

In such a sickly longing for his son.  
We shall soon see him, for the Emperor  
He will be here this morning.

AURANTHE.

That I heard  
Among the midnight rumours from the camp.

CONRAD.

You give up Albert to me?

AURANTHE.

Harm him not!  
E'en for his highness Ludolph's sceptry hand,  
I would not Albert suffer any wrong.

CONRAD.

Have I not laboured, plotted —?

AURANTHE.

See you spare hi  
Nor be pathetic, my kind benefactor,  
On all the many bounties of your hand, —  
'Twas for yourself you laboured — not for me!  
Do you not count, when I am queen, to take  
Advantage of your chance discoveries  
Of my poor secrets, and so hold a rod  
Over my life?



SCENE I.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

459

In haste it seems. Now shall I be in the way,  
And wish'd with silent curses in my grave, 120  
Or side by side with 'whelmed mariners.

*Enter ALBERT.*

ALBERT.

Fair on your graces fall this early morrow!  
So it is like to do, without my prayers,  
For your right noble names, like favorite tunes,  
Have fallen full frequent from our Emperor's lips, 125  
High commented with smiles.

AURANTHE.

Noble Albert!

CONRAD (*aside*).

Noble!

AURANTHE.

Such salutation argues a glad heart  
In our prosperity. We thank you, sir.

ALBERT.

Lady! O, would to Heaven your poor servant  
Could do you better service than mere words! 130  
But I have other greeting than mine own,  
From no less man than Otho, who has sent  
This ring as pledge of dearest amity;  
'Tis chosen I hear from Hymen's jewel'ry,  
And you will prize it, lady, I doubt not, 135  
Beyond all pleasures past, and all to come.  
To you great duke —

CONRAD.

To me! What of me, ha?

ALBERT.

What pleas'd your grace to say?



Sister, this way;  
For there shall be no "gentle Alberts" now, [As  
No "sweet Auranthes!"

[*Exeunt* CONRAD

ALBERT (*solus*).

The duke is out of temper; if he knows  
More than a brother of a sister ought,  
I should not quarrel with his peevishness.  
Auranthe — Heaven preserve her always fair! —  
Is in the heady, proud, ambitious vein;  
I bicker not with her, — bid her farewell!  
She has taken flight from me, then let her soar, —  
He is a fool who stands at pining gaze!  
But for poor Ludolph, he is food for sorrow:  
No levelling bluster of my licens'd thoughts,  
No military swagger of my mind,  
Can smother from myself the wrong I've done him,  
Without design, indeed, — yet it is so, —  
And opiate for the conscience have I none!

SCENE II. — *The Court-yard of the Cas*

*Martial Music. Enter, from the outer gate, OTHO, .  
and Attendants. The Soldiers halt at the gate,  
in sight.*

OTHO.

Where is my noble herald?

Lest our rent banners, too o' the sudden shown,  
Should fright her silken casements, and dismay  
Her household to our lack of entertainment.  
A victory!

5

CONRAD.

God save illustrious Otho!

OTHO.

Aye, Conrad, it will pluck out all grey hairs;  
It is the best physician for the spleen;  
The courtliest inviter to a feast;  
The subtlest excuser of small faults;  
And a nice judge in the age and smack of wine.

10

*Enter, from the Castle, AURANTHE, followed by Pages holding up her robes, and a train of Women. She kneels.*

Hail my sweet hostess! I do thank the stars,  
Or my good soldiers, or their ladies' eyes,  
That, after such a merry battle fought,  
I can, all safe in body and in soul,  
Kiss your fair hand and lady fortune's too.  
My ring! now, on my life, it doth rejoice  
These lips to feel 't on this soft ivory!  
Keep it, my brightest daughter; it may prove  
The little prologue to a line of kings.  
I strove against thee and my hot-blood son,  
Dull blockhead that I was to be so blind,  
But now my sight is clear; forgive me, lady.

15

20

AURANTHE.

My lord, I was a vassal to your frown,  
And now your favour makes me but more humble;  
In wintry winds the simple snow is safe,  
But fadeth at the greeting of the sun:  
Unto thine anger I might well have spoken,  
Taking on me a woman's privilege,  
But this so sudden kindness makes me dumb.

25

30

He has not yet return'd, my gracious liege.

OTHO.

What then ! No tidings of my friendly Arab?

CONRAD.

None, mighty Otho.

*[To one of his Knights]*

Send forth instantly

An hundred horsemen from my honoured gates,  
To scour the plains and search the cottages.  
Cry a reward, to him who shall first bring  
News of that vanished Arabian,  
A full-heap'd helmet of the purest gold.

OTHO.

More thanks, dear Conrad ; for, except my son's,  
There is no face I rather would behold  
Than that same quick-ey'd pagan's. By the saints,  
This coming night of banquets must not light  
Her dazzling torches ; nor the music breathe  
Smooth, without clashing cymbal, tones of peace  
And in-door melodies ; nor the ruddy wine  
Ebb spouting to the lees ; if I pledge not,  
In my first cup, that Arab !

ALBERT.

...

And, to say truth, in any Christian arm  
I never saw such prowess.

OTHO.

Did you ever?

O, 'tis a noble boy! — tut! — what do I say?  
I mean a triple Saladin, whose eyes,  
When in the glorious scuffle they met mine,  
Seem'd to say — “ Sleep, old man, in safety sleep;  
I am the victory !”

60

CONRAD.

Pity he's not here.

OTHO.

And my son too, pity he is not here.  
Lady Auranthe, I would not make you blush,  
But can you give a guess where Ludolph is?  
Know you not of him?

65

AURANTHE.

Indeed, my liege, no secret —

OTHO.

Nay, nay, without more words, dost know of him?

AURANTHE.

I would I were so over-fortunate,  
Both for his sake and mine, and to make glad  
A father's ears with tidings of his son.

70

OTHO.

I see 'tis like to be a tedious day.  
Were Theodore and Gonfrid and the rest  
Sent forth with my commands?

ALBERT.

Aye, my lord.

---

(73) It is possible that some such word as *good* before *lord* has dropped out accidentally.

Will't please your highness enter, and accept  
The unworthy welcome of your servant's house?  
Leaving your cares to one whose diligence  
May in few hours make pleasures of them all.

OTHO.

Not so tedious, Conrad. No, no, no, —  
I must see Ludolph or the — What's that shout?

VOICES WITHOUT.

Huzza! huzza! Long live the Emperor!

OTHER VOICES.

Fall back! Away there!

OTHO.

Say, what noise is that?

[ALBERT *advancing from the back of the Stage*  
*had hastened on hearing the cheers of the*

ALBERT.

It is young Gersa, the Hungarian prince,  
Pick'd like a red stag from the fallow herd  
Of prisoners. Poor prince, forlorn he steps,  
Slow, and demure, and proud in his despair.  
If I may judge by his so tragic bearing

OTHO.

Well said, Sir Albert.

GERSA.

Not a word of greeting,  
 No welcome to a princely visitor,  
 Most mighty Otho? Will not my great host  
 Vouchsafe a syllable, before he bids  
 His gentlemen conduct me with all care  
 To some securest lodging — cold perhaps!

OTHO.

What mood is this? Hath fortune touch'd thy brain?

GERSA.

O kings and princes of this fev'rous world,  
 What abject things, what mockeries must ye be,  
 What nerveless minions of safe palaces!  
 When here, a monarch, whose proud foot is used  
 To fallen princes' necks, as to his stirrup,  
 Must needs exclaim that I am mad forsooth,  
 Because I cannot flatter with bent knees  
 My conqueror!

OTHO.

Gersa, I think you wrong me:  
 I think I have a better fame abroad.

GERSA.

I prythee mock me not with gentle speech,  
 But, as a favour, bid me from thy presence;  
 Let me no longer be the wondering food  
 Of all these eyes; prythee command me hence!

OTHO.

Do not mistake me, Gersa. That you may not,  
 Come, fair Auranthe, try if your soft hands  
 Can manage those hard rivets to set free  
 So brave a prince and soldier.



AURANTHE (*sets him free*).

Welcome task!

GERSA.

I am wound up in deep astonishment!  
Thank you, fair lady. Otho! emperor!  
You rob me of yourself; my dignity  
Is now your infant; I am a weak child.

120

OTHO.

Give me your hand, and let this kindly grasp  
Live in our memories.

GERSA.

In mine it will.

I blush to think of my unchasten'd tongue;  
But I was haunted by the monstrous ghost  
Of all our slain battalions. Sire, reflect,  
And pardon you will grant, that, at this hour,  
The bruised remnants of our stricken camp  
Are huddling undistinguish'd my dear friends,  
With common thousands, into shallow graves.

125

OTHO.

Enough, most noble Gersa. You are free  
To cheer the brave remainder of your host  
By your own healing presence, and that too,  
Not as their leader merely, but their king;  
For, as I hear, the wily enemy,  
Who eas'd the crownet from your infant brows,  
Bloody Taraxa, is among the dead.

130

135

GERSA.

Then I retire, so generous Otho please,  
Bearing with me a weight of benefits  
Too heavy to be borne.

OTHO.

It is not so;  
Still understand me, King of Hungary,

140



SCENE II.]

OTHO THE GREAT.

467

Nor judge my open purposes awry.  
Though I did hold you high in my esteem  
For your self's sake, I do not personate  
The stage-play emperor to entrap applause,  
To set the silly sort o' the world agape, 145  
And make the politic smile; no, I have heard  
How in the Council you condemn'd this war,  
Urging the perfidy of broken faith, —  
For that I am your friend.

GERSA.

If ever, sire,  
You are my enemy, I dare hear swear 150  
'Twill not be Gersa's fault. Otho, farewell!

OTHO.

Will you return, Prince, to our banqueting?

GERSA.

As to my father's board I will return.

OTHO.

Conrad, with all due ceremony, give  
The prince a regal escort to his camp; 155  
Albert, go thou and bear him company.  
Gersa, farewell!

GERSA.

All happiness attend you!

OTHO.

Return with what good speed you may; for soon  
We must consult upon our terms of peace.

[*Exeunt* GERSA and ALBERT with others.]

And thus a marble column do I build 160  
To prop my empire's dome. Conrad, in thee  
I have another stedfast one, to uphold  
The portals of my state; and, for my own  
Pre-eminence and safety, I will strive  
To keep thy strength upon its pedestal. 165  
For, without thee, this day I might have been



... by experience,  
I know how the great basement of all power  
Is frankness, and a true tongue to the world;  
And how intriguing secrecy is proof  
Of fear and weakness, and a hollow state.  
Conrad, I owe thee much.

CONRAD.

To kiss that hand,  
My emperor, is ample recompense,  
For a mere act of duty.

OTHO.

Thou art wrong;  
For what can any man on earth do more?  
We will make trial of your house's welcome,  
My bright Auranthe!

CONRAD.

How is Friedburg honoured!

*Enter ETHELBERT and six Monks.*

ETHELBERT.

The benison of heaven on your head,  
Imperial Otho!

OTHO.

Who staves ...



SCENE III.]

OTHO THE GREAT.

469

OTHO.

Pray, do not prose, good Ethelbert, but speak  
What is your purpose.

190

ETHELBERT.

The restoration of some captive maids,  
Devoted to Heaven's pious ministries,  
Who, driven forth from their religious cells,  
And kept in thralldom by our enemy,  
When late this province was a lawless spoil,  
Still weep amid the wild Hungarian camp,  
Though hemm'd around by thy victorious arms.

195

OTHO.

Demand the holy sisterhood in our name  
From Gersa's tents. Farewell, old Ethelbert.

ETHELBERT.

The saints will bless you for this pious care.

200

OTHO.

Daughter, your hand ; Ludolph's would fit it best.

CONRAD.

Ho ! let the music sound !

[*Music.* ETHELBERT raises his hands, as in benediction of  
OTHO. *Exeunt severally. The scene closes on them.*

SCENE III. — *The Country, with the Castle in the distance.*

*Enter LUDOLPH and SIGIFRED.*

LUDOLPH.

You have my secret ; let it not be breath'd.

... u masquerade.

LUDOLPH.

The Emperor must not know it, Sigifred.

SIGIFRED.

I prythee, why? What happier hour of time  
Could thy pleas'd star point down upon from he  
With silver index, bidding thee make peace?

LUDOLPH.

Still it must not be known, good Sigifred;  
The star may point oblique.

SIGIFRED.

If Otho knew  
His son to be that unknown Mussulman  
After whose spurring heels he sent me forth,  
With one of his well-pleas'd Olympian oaths,  
The charters of man's greatness, at this hour  
He would be watching round the castle walls,  
And, like an anxious warder, strain his sight  
For the first glimpse of such a son return'd —  
Ludolph, that blast of the Hungarians,  
That Saracenic meteor of the fight,  
That silent fury, whose fell scymitar  
Kept danger all aloof from Otho's head,  
And left him space for wonder.



Known only to his troop, hath greater plea  
Of favour with my sire than I can have.

SIGIFRED.

My lord, forgive me that I cannot see 30  
How this proud temper with clear reason squares.  
What made you then, with such an anxious love,  
Hover around that life, whose bitter days  
You vext with bad revolt? Was 't opium,  
Or the mad-fumed wine? Nay, do not frown, 35  
I rather would grieve with you than upbraid.

LUDOLPH.

I do believe you. No, 'twas not to make  
A father his son's debtor, or to heal  
His deep heart-sickness for a rebel child.  
'Twas done in memory of my boyish days, 40  
Poor cancel for his kindness to my youth,  
For all his calming of my childish griefs,  
And all his smiles upon my merriment.  
No, not a thousand foughten fields could sponge  
Those days paternal from my memory, 45  
Though now upon my head he heaps disgrace.

SIGIFRED.

My Prince, you think too harshly —

LUDOLPH.

Can I so?

Hath he not gall'd my spirit to the quick?  
And with a sullen rigour obstinate  
Pour'd out a phial of wrath upon my faults? 50  
Hunted me as the Tartar does the boar,  
Driven me to the very edge o' the world,  
And almost put a price upon my head?

SIGIFRED.

Remember how he spar'd the rebel lords.

LUDOLPH.

Yes, yes, I know he hath a noble nature 55  
That cannot trample on the fallen. But his

And ta'en his favour.

LUDOLPH.

Ha! till now I thought  
My friend had held poor Ludolph's honour dear.  
What! would you have me sue before his throne  
And kiss the courtier's missal, its silk steps?  
Or hug the golden housings of his steed,  
Amid a camp, whose steeled swarms I dar'd  
But yesterday? And, at the trumpet sound,  
Bow like some unknown mercenary's flag,  
And lick the soiled grass? No, no, my friend,  
I would not, I, be pardon'd in the heap,  
And bless indemnity with all that scum, —  
Those men I mean, who on my shoulders propp'd  
Their weak rebellion, winning me with lies,  
And pitying forsooth my many wrongs;  
Poor self-deceived wretches, who must think  
Each one himself a king in embryo,  
Because some dozen vassals cry'd — my lord!  
Cowards, who never knew their little hearts,  
Till flurried danger held the mirror up,  
And then they own'd themselves without a blush,  
Curling, like spaniels, round my father's feet.  
Such things deserted me and are forgiven,  
While I, least guilty, am an outcast still,  
And will be, for I love such fair disgrace.

SIGIFRED.

I know the clear truth; so would Otho see.



SCENE III.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

473

Endanger not yourself so uselessly. 90  
I will encounter his thwart spleen myself,  
To-day, at the Duke Conrad's, where he keeps  
His crowded state after the victory.  
There will I be, a most unwelcome guest,  
And parley with him, as a son should do, 95  
Who doubly loathes a father's tyranny;  
Tell him how feeble is that tyranny;  
How the relationship of father and son  
Is no more valid than a silken leash  
Where lions tug adverse, if love grow not 100  
From interchanged love through many years.  
Aye, and those turreted Franconian walls,  
Like to a jealous casket, hold my pearl —  
My fair Auranthe! Yes, I will be there.

SIGIFRED.

Be not so rash; wait till his wrath shall pass, 105  
Until his royal spirit softly ebbs  
Self-influenced; then, in his morning dreams  
He will forgive thee, and awake in grief  
To have not thy good morrow.

LUDOLPH.

Yes, to-day  
I must be there, while her young pulses beat 110  
Among the new-plum'd minions of the war.  
Have you seen her of late? No? Auranthe,  
Franconia's fair sister, 'tis I mean.  
She should be paler for my troublous days —  
And there it is — my father's iron lips 115  
Have sworn divorcement 'twixt me and my right.

SIGIFRED (*aside*).

Auranthe! I had hop'd this whim had pass'd.

LUDOLPH.

And, Sigifred, with all his love of justice,  
When will he take that grandchild in his arms,  
That, by my love I swear, shall soon be his? 120  
This reconciliation is impossible,  
For see — but who are these?

SIGIFRED.

They are messengers  
From our great emperor; to you, I doubt not,  
For couriers are abroad to seek you out.

*Enter THEODORE and GONFRED.*

THEODORE.

Seeing so many vigilant eyes explore  
The province to invite your highness back  
To your high dignities, we are too happy.

125

GONFRED.

We have no eloquence to colour justly  
The emperor's anxious wishes.

LUDOLPH.

Go. I follow you.

*[Exeunt THEODORE and GONFRED.]*

I play the prude: it is but venturing —  
Why should he be so earnest? Come, my friend,  
Let us to Friedburg castle.

130

ACT II.

SCENE I. — *An Ante-chamber in the Castle.*

*Enter LUDOLPH and SIGIFRED.*

LUDOLPH.

No more advices, no more cautioning;  
I leave it all to fate — to any thing!  
I cannot square my conduct to time, place,  
Or circumstance; to me 'tis all a mist!

SIGIFRED.

I say no more.



SCENE I.]

OTHO THE GREAT.

475

LUDOLPH.

It seems I am to wait  
Here in the ante-room ; — that may be a trifle. 5  
You see now how I dance attendance here,  
Without that tyrant temper, you so blame,  
Snapping the rein. You have medicin'd me  
With good advices ; and I here remain, 10  
In this most honourable ante-room,  
Your patient scholar.

SIGIFRED.

Do not wrong me, Prince.  
By Heavens, I'd rather kiss Duke Conrad's slipper,  
When in the morning he doth yawn with pride,  
Than see you humbled but a half-degree ! 15  
Truth is, the Emperor would fain dismiss  
The nobles ere he sees you.

*Enter GONFRED, from the Council-room.*

LUDOLPH.

Well, sir ! what ?

GONFRED.

Great honour to the Prince ! The Emperor,  
Hearing that his brave son had re-appeared,  
Instant dismiss'd the Council from his sight, 20  
As Jove fans off the clouds. Even now they pass.

[*Exit.*

*Enter the Nobles from the Council-room. They cross the stage, bowing with respect to LUDOLPH, he frowning on them. CONRAD follows. Exeunt Nobles.*

LUDOLPH.

Not the discoloured poisons of a fen,  
Which he who breathes feels warning of his death,  
Could taste so nauseous to the bodily sense,  
As these prodigious sycophants disgust 25  
The soul's fine palate.



CONRAD.

Princely Ludolph, hail !

Welcome, thou younger sceptre to the realm !  
 Strength to thy virgin crown's golden buds,  
 That they, against the winter of thy sire,  
 May burst, and swell, and flourish round thy brows, 30  
 Maturing to a weighty diadem !  
 Yet be that hour far off ; and may he live,  
 Who waits for thee, as the chapp'd earth for rain.  
 Set my life's star ! I have lived long enough,  
 Since under my glad roof, propitiously, 35  
 Father and son each other re-possess.

LUDOLPH.

Fine wording, Duke ! but words could never yet  
 Forestall the fates ; have you not learnt that yet ?  
 Let me look well : your features are the same ;  
 Your gait the same ; your hair of the same shade ; 40  
 As one I knew some passed weeks ago,  
 Who sung far different notes into mine ears.  
 I have mine own particular comments on 't ;  
 You have your own, perhaps.

CONRAD.

My gracious Prince,  
 All men may err. In truth I was deceived 45  
 In your great father's nature, as you were.  
 Had I known that of him I have since known,  
 And what you soon will learn, I would have turn'd  
 My sword to my own throat, rather than held  
 Its threatening edge against a good King's quiet : 50  
 Or with one word fever'd you, gentle Prince,  
 Who seem'd to me, as rugged times then went,  
 Indeed too much oppress'd. May I be bold  
 To tell the Emperor you will haste to him ?

LUDOLPH.

Your Dukedom's privilege will grant so much.

He's very close to Otho, a tight leech !  
 Your hand — I go. Ha ! here the thunder comes

55  
 [Exit CONRAD.]



SCENE I.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

477

Sullen against the wind ! If in two angry brows  
My safety lies, then Sigifred, I'm safe.

*Enter OTHO and CONRAD.*

OTHO.

Will you make Titan play the lackey-page 6c  
To chattering pigmies? I would have you know  
That such neglect of our high Majesty  
Annuls all feel of kindred. What is son, —  
Or friend, — or brother, — or all ties of blood, —  
When the whole kingdom, centred in ourself, 65  
Is rudely slighted? Who am I to wait?  
By Peter's chair ! I have upon my tongue  
A word to fright the proudest spirit here ! —  
Death ! — and slow tortures to the hardy fool,  
Who dares take such large charter from our smiles ! 70  
Conrad, we would be private. Sigifred !  
Off ! And none pass this way on pain of death !

*[Exeunt CONRAD and SIGIFRED.]*

LUDOLPH.

This was but half expected, my good sire,  
Yet I am griev'd at it, to the full height,  
As though my hopes of favour had been whole. 75

OTHO.

How you indulge yourself ! What can you hope for ?

LUDOLPH.

Nothing, my liege ; I have to hope for nothing.  
I come to greet you as a loving son,  
And then depart, if I may be so free,  
Seeing that blood of yours in my warm veins 8c  
Has not yet mitigated into milk.

OTHO.

What would you, sir ?

LUDOLPH.

A lenient banishment ;  
So please you let me unmolested pass

serv'd with harsh food, with scum for Sunday-dinner

LUDOLPH.

Indeed!

OTHO.

And chains too heavy for your life:  
I'll choose a gaoler, whose swart monstrous face  
Shall be a hell to look upon, and she —

LUDOLPH.

Ha!

OTHO.

Shall be your fair Auranthe.

LUDOLPH.

Amaze! Amaze!

OTHO.

To-day you marry her.

LUDOLPH.

This is a sharp jest!

OTHO.

No. None at all. When have I said a lie?



SCENE I.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

479

LUDOLPH.

I dare not. 'Twould pollute so good a father!  
O heavy crime! that your son's blinded eyes  
Could not see all his parent's love aright,  
As now I see it. Be not kind to me —  
Punish me not with favour.

100

OTHO.

Are you sure,  
Ludolph, you have no saving plea in store?

LUDOLPH.

My father, none!

OTHO.

Then you astonish me.

LUDOLPH.

No, I have no plea. Disobedience,  
Rebellion, obstinacy, blasphemy,  
Are all my counsellors. If they can make  
My crooked deeds show good and plausible,  
Then grant me loving pardon, but not else,  
Good Gods! not else, in any way, my liege!

105

110

OTHO.

You are a most perplexing, noble boy.

LUDOLPH.

You not less a perplexing noble father.

OTHO.

Well, you shall have free passport through the gates.  
Farewell!

LUDOLPH.

Farewell! and by these tears believe,  
And still remember, I repent in pain  
All my misdeeds!

115

LUDOLPH.

No, my good lord, I cannot say I did.

OTHO.

Make not your father blind before his time ;  
Nor let these arms paternal hunger more  
For an embrace, to dull the appetite  
Of my great love for thee, my supreme child !  
Come close, and let me breathe into thine ear.  
I knew you through disguise. You are the Arab  
You can't deny it.

LUDOLPH.

Happiest of days !

OTHO.

We'll make it so.

LUDOLPH.

'Stead of one fatted calf  
Ten hecatombs shall bellow out their last,  
Smote 'twixt the horns by the death-stunning mace  
Of Mars, and all the soldiery shall feast  
Nobly as Nimrod's masons, when the towers  
Of Nineveh new kiss'd the parted clouds !

OTHO.

Enter Otho and Ludolph.



SCENE II.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

481

In tender victory, but for myself  
I still must mourn. The fair Auranthe mine!  
Too great a boon! I prythee let me ask  
What more than I know of could so have changed  
Your purpose touching her?

140

OTHO.

At a word, this:  
In no deed did you give me more offence  
Than your rejection of Erminia.  
To my appalling, I saw too good proof  
Of your keen-ey'd suspicion, — she is naught!

145

LUDOLPH.

You are convinc'd.

OTHO.

Aye, spite of her sweet looks.  
O, that my brother's daughter should so fall!  
Her fame has pass'd into the grosser lips  
Of soldiers in their cups.

LUDOLPH.

'Tis very sad.

150

OTHO.

No more of her. Auranthe — Ludolph, come!  
This marriage be the bond of endless peace!

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II. — *The Entrance of GERSA'S Tent in the Hungarian Camp.*

*Enter ERMINIA.*

ERMINIA.

Where! where! where shall I find a messenger?  
A trusty soul? A good man in the camp?  
Shall I go myself? Monstrous wickedness!  
O cursed Conrad! devilish Auranthe!

...ing eye, now our king, — but still your slave  
Young Gersa, from a short captivity  
Has just return'd. He bids me say, bright dame,  
That even the homage of his ranged chiefs  
Cures not his keen impatience to behold  
Such beauty once again. What ails you, lady?

ERMINIA.

Say, is not that a German, yonder? There!

CAPTAIN.

Methinks by his stout bearing he should be —  
Yes — it is Albert; a brave German knight,  
And much in the emperor's favour.

ERMINIA.

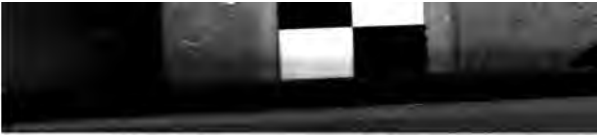
I would fain  
Enquire of friends and kinsfolk; how they fared  
In these rough times. Brave soldier, as you pass  
To royal Gersa with my humble thanks,  
Will you send yonder knight to me?

CAPTAIN.

I will.

ERMINIA.

Yes, he was ever known to be a man  
Frank, open, generous; Albert I may trust.  
O proof! proof! proof! Albert's an honest man;  
Not Ethelbert the monk, if he were here,  
Would I hold more trustworthiness than he!



In this beleaguer'd camp? Or are you here  
Of your own will? You pleas'd to send for me.  
By Venus, 'tis a pity I knew not  
Your plight before, and, by her Son, I swear  
To do you every service you can ask.  
What would the fairest —? 30

ERMINIA.  
Albert, will you swear?

I have. Well?  
ALBERT.

ERMINIA.  
Albert, you have fame to lose.  
If men, in court and camp, lie not outright,  
You should be, from a thousand, chosen forth  
To do an honest deed. Shall I confide — ? 35

ALBERT.  
Aye, anything to me, fair creature. Do;  
Dictate my task. Sweet woman, —

ERMINIA.  
Truce with that.  
You understand me not; and, in your speech,  
I see how far the slander is abroad.  
Without proof could you think me innocent? 40

ALBERT.  
Lady, I should rejoice to know you so.

ERMINIA.  
If you have any pity for a maid,  
Suffering a daily death from evil tongues;  
Any compassion for that Emperor's niece,  
Who, for your bright sword and clear honesty,  
Lifted you from the crowd of common men  
Into the lap of honour; — save me, knight ! 45

ALBERT.  
How? Make it clear; if it be possible,  
I, by the banner of Saint Maurice, swear  
To right you. 50







I am gone.  
ALBERT.

ERMINIA.  
Swift be your steed! Within this hour  
The Emperor will see it.

ALBERT.  
Ere I sleep: 80  
That I can swear. [Hurries out.]

GERSA (*without*).  
Brave captains! thanks. Enough  
Of loyal homage now!

*Enter GERSA.*

ERMINIA.  
Hail, royal Hun!

GERSA.  
What means this, fair one? Why in such alarm?  
Who was it hurried by me so distract?  
It seem'd you were in deep discourse together; 85  
Your doctrine has not been so harsh to him  
As to my poor deserts. Come, come, be plain.  
I am no jealous fool to kill you both,  
Or, for such trifles, rob th' adorned world  
Of such a beauteous vestal.

ERMINIA.  
I grieve, my Lord, 90  
To hear you condescend to ribald-phrase.

GERSA.  
This is too much! Hearken, my lady pure!

ERMINIA.  
Silence! and hear the magic of a name —  
Erminia! I am she, — the Emperor's niece!  
Prais'd be the Heavens, I now dare own myself! 95

GERSA.

And you dare own your name  
For loveliness you may — and for the rest  
My vein is not censorious.

ERMINIA.

Alas! poor me!

'Tis false indeed.

GERSA.

Indeed you are too fair:  
The swan, soft leaning on her fledgy breast,  
When to the stream she launches, looks not back  
With such a tender grace; nor are her wings  
So white as your soul is, if that but be  
Twin picture to your face. Erminia!  
To-day, for the first day, I am a king,  
Yet would I give my unworn crown away  
To know you spotless.

ERMINIA.

Trust me one day more,  
Generously, without more certain guarantee,  
Than this poor face you deign to praise so much;  
After that, say and do what'er you please.  
If I have any knowledge of you, sir,  
I think, nay I am sure, you will grieve much  
To hear my story. O be gentle to me,  
For I am sick and faint with many wrongs.



*Enter* ETHELBERT.

ERMINIA.

Gentle Prince, 'tis false indeed.  
Good morrow, holy father! I have had  
Your prayers, though I look'd for you in vain. 120

ETHELBERT.

Blessings upon you, daughter! Sure you look  
Too cheerful for these foul pernicious days.  
Young man, you heard this virgin say 'twas false, —  
'Tis false, I say. What! can you not employ  
Your temper elsewhere, 'mong those burly tents, 125  
But you must taunt this dove, for she hath lost  
The Eagle Otho to beat off assault?  
Fie! fie! But I will be her guard myself;  
I' the Emperor's name. I here demand  
Herself, and all her sisterhood. She false! 130

GERSA.

Peace! peace, old man! I cannot think she is.

ETHELBERT.

Whom I have known from her first infancy,  
Baptiz'd her in the bosom of the Church,  
Watch'd her, as anxious husbandmen the grain,  
From the first shoot till the unripe mid-May, 135  
Then to the tender ear of her June days,  
Which, lifting sweet abroad its timid green,  
Is blighted by the touch of calumny;  
You cannot credit such a monstrous tale.

GERSA.

I cannot. Take her. Fair Erminia, 140  
I follow you to Friedburg, — is't not so?

ERMINIA.

Aye, so we purpose.

ETHELBERT.

Daughter, do you so?  
How's this? I marvel! Yet you look not mad.

ERMINIA.

I have good news to tell you, Ethelbert.

GERSA.

Ho! ho, there! Guards! 145  
Your blessing, father! Sweet Erminia,  
Believe me, I am well nigh sure —

ERMINIA.

Farewell!

Short time will show. [Enter Chiefs.  
Yes, father Ethelbert,  
I have news precious as we pass along.

ETHELBERT.

Dear daughter, you shall guide me.

ERMINIA.

To no ill. 150

GERSA.

Command an escort to the Friedburg lines.

Pray let me lead. Fair lady, forget not  
Gersa, how he believ'd you innocent.  
I follow you to Friedburg with all speed. [Exeunt.

### ACT III.

#### SCENE I. — *The Country.*

*Enter* ALBERT.

ALBERT.

O that the earth were empty, as when Cain  
Had no perplexity to hide his head!  
Or that the sword of some brave enemy  
Had put a sudden stop to my hot breath,  
And hurl'd me down the illimitable gulph



SCENE I.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

489

Of times past, unremember'd! Better so  
Than thus fast-limed in a cursed snare,  
The white limbs of a wanton. This the end  
Of an aspiring life! My boyhood past  
In feud with wolves and bears, when no eye saw 10  
The solitary warfare, fought for love  
Of honour 'mid the growling wilderness.  
My sturdier youth, maturing to the sword,  
Won by the syren-trumpets, and the ring  
Of shields upon the pavement, when bright-mail'd 15  
Henry the Fowler pass'd the streets of Prague.  
Was 't to this end I louted and became  
The menial of Mars, and held a spear  
Sway'd by command, as corn is by the wind?  
Is it for this, I now am lifted up 20  
By Europe's throned Emperor, to see  
My honour be my executioner, —  
My love of fame, my prided honesty  
Put to the torture for confessional?  
Then the damn'd crime of blurting to the world 25  
A woman's secret! — Though a fiend she be,  
Too tender of my ignominious life;  
But then to wrong the generous Emperor  
In such a searching point, were to give up  
My soul for foot-ball at Hell's holiday! 30  
I must confess, — and cut my throat, — to-day?  
To-morrow? Ho! some wine!

*Enter SIGIFRED.*

SIGIFRED.

A fine humour —

ALBERT.

Who goes there? Count Sigifred? Ha! Ha!

SIGIFRED.

What, man, do you mistake the hollow sky  
For a throng'd tavern, — and these stubbed trees 35  
For old serge hangings, — me, your humble friend,  
For a poor waiter? Why, man, how you stare!  
What gipsies have you been carousing with?  
No, no more wine; methinks you've had enough.

Some tavern brawl?

ALBERT.

'Twas with some people out of common reach ;  
Revenge is difficult.

SIGIFRED.

I am your friend ;  
We meet again to-day, and can confer  
Upon it. For the present I'm in haste.

ALBERT.

Whither?

SIGIFRED.

To fetch King Gersa to the feast.  
The Emperor on this marriage is so hot,  
Pray Heaven it end not in apoplexy !  
The very porters, as I pass'd the doors,  
Heard his loud laugh, and answer'd in full choir.  
I marvel, Albert, you delay so long  
From these bright revelries ; go, show yourself,  
You may be made a duke.

ALBERT.

Aye, very like :  
Pray, what day has his Highness fix'd upon?

-----

SIGIFRED.

To-day. O, I forgot, you could not know;  
The news is scarce a minute old with me.

ALBERT.

Married to-day! To-day! You did not say so?

SIGIFRED.

Now, while I speak to you, their comely heads  
Are bow'd before the mitre. 60

ALBERT.

O! Monstrous!

SIGIFRED.

What is this?

ALBERT.

Nothing, Sigifred. Farewell!  
We'll meet upon our subject. Farewell, count! [Exit.

SIGIFRED.

Is this clear-headed Albert? He brain-turn'd!  
'Tis as portentous as a meteor. [Exit. 65

SCENE II. — *An Apartment in the Castle.*

*Enter, as from the Marriage, OTHO, LUDOLPH, AURANTHE, CONRAD,  
Nobles, Knights, Ladies, &c. Music.*

OTHO.

Now, Ludolph! Now, Auranthe! Daughter fair!  
What can I find to grace your nuptial day  
More than my love, and these wide realms in fee?

LUDOLPH.

I have too much.

---

(64) In former editions *To* is the first word in this line. I have ventured to substitute *Is*, as making sense of the question, because I know how like the two words often are in Keats's writing.



AURANTHE.

And I, my liege, by far.

LUDOLPH.

Auranthe! I have! O, my bride, my love! 5  
 Not all the gaze upon us can restrain  
 My eyes, too long poor exiles from thy face,  
 From adoration, and my foolish tongue  
 From uttering soft responses to the love  
 I see in thy mute beauty beaming forth! 10  
 Fair creature, bless me with a single word!  
 All mine!

AURANTHE.

Spare, spare me, my Lord; I swoon else.

LUDOLPH.

Soft beauty! by to-morrow I should die,  
 Wert thou not mine. *[They talk apart.]*

FIRST LADY.

How deep she has bewitch'd him!

FIRST KNIGHT.

Ask you for her recipe for love philtres. 15

SECOND LADY.

They hold the Emperor in admiration.

OTHO.

If ever king was happy, that am I!  
 What are the cities 'yond the Alps to me,  
 The provinces about the Danube's mouth,  
 The promise of fair sail beyond the Rhone; 20  
 Or routing out of Hyperborean hordes,  
 To these fair children, stars of a new age?  
 Unless perchance I might rejoice to win  
 This little ball of earth, and chuck it them  
 To play with!

AURANTHE.

Nay, my Lord, I do not know. 25

LUDOLPH.

Let me not famish.

OTHO (*to Conrad*).

Good Franconia,  
You heard what oath I swear, as the sun rose,  
That unless Heaven would send me back my son,  
My Arab, — no soft music should enrich  
The cool wine, kiss'd off with a soldier's smack;  
Now all my empire, barter'd for one feast,  
Seems poverty.

30

CONRAD.

Upon the neighbour-plain  
The heralds have prepar'd a royal lists;  
Your knights, found war-proof in the bloody field,  
Speed to the game.

OTHO.

Well, Ludolph, what say you?

35

LUDOLPH.

My lord!

OTHO.

A tourney?

CONRAD.

Or, if't please you best —

LUDOLPH.

I want no more!

FIRST LADY.

He soars!

SECOND LADY.

Past all reason.

LUDOLPH.

Though heaven's choir  
Should in a vast circumference descend  
And sing for my delight, I'd stop my ears!  
Though bright Apollo's car stood burning here,

40

And old romances ; but I'll break the spell.  
Ludolph !

CONRAD.

He'll be calm, anon.

LUDOLPH.

You call'd?

Yes, yes, yes, I offend. You must forgive me ;  
Not being quite recover'd from the stun  
Of your large bounties. A tourney, is it not?

[*A sennet*

CONRAD.

The trumpets reach us.

ETHELBERT (*without*).

On your peril, sirs,

Detain us !

FIRST VOICE (*without*).

Let not the abbot pass.

SECOND VOICE (*without*).

No,

On your lives !

FIRST VOICE (*without*).

Holy father, you must not.

ETHELBERT (*without*).

Ethelbert!

OTHO.

Let him come in

[*Enter* ETHELBERT *leading in* ERMINIA.

Thou cursed abbot why  
Hast brought pollution to our holy rites?  
Hast thou no fear of hangman, or the faggot?

LUDOLPH.

What portent — what strange prodigy is this?

60

CONRAD.

Away!

ETHELBERT.

You, Duke?

ERMINIA.

Albert has surely fail'd me!  
Look at the Emperor's brow upon me bent!

ETHELBERT.

A sad delay!

CONRAD.

Away, thou guilty thing!

ETHELBERT.

You again, Duke? Justice, most noble Otho!  
You — go to your sister there and plot again,  
A quick plot, swift as thought to save your heads;  
For lo! the toils are spread around your den,  
The world is all agape to see dragg'd forth  
Two ugly monsters.

65

LUDOLPH.

What means he, my lord?

CONRAD.

I cannot guess.

The Princess faints !

LUDOLPH.

Stab him! O, sweetest wif  
[Attendants bear

ERMINIA.

Alas !

ETHELBERT.

Your wife?

LUDOLPH.

Aye, Satan! does that yerker ye?

ETHELBERT.

Wife! so soon!

LUDOLPH.

Aye, wife! Oh, impudence!  
Thou bitter mischief! Venomous bad priest!  
How dar'st thou lift those beetle brows at me?  
Me — the prince Ludolph, in this presence here,  
Upon my marriage-day, and scandalize  
My joys with such opprobrious surprise?  
Wife! Why dost linger on that syllable,  
As if it were some demon's name pronounc'd  
To summon harmful lightning, and make yawn  
The sleepy thunder? Hast no sense of fear?  
No ounce of man in thy mortality?  
Tremble! for, at my nod, the sharpen'd axe  
Will make thy bold tongue quiver to the roots,



SCENE II.]

OTHO THE GREAT.

497

LUDOLPH.

Thou shalt hav 't! 90  
Thine arms from forth a pulpit of hot fire  
Shall sprawl distracted? O that that dull cowl  
Were some most sensitive portion of thy life,  
That I might give it to my hounds to tear!  
Thy girdle some fine zealous-pained nerve 95  
To girth my saddle! And those devil's beads  
Each one a life, that I might, every day,  
Crush one with Vulcan's hammer!

OTHO.

Peace, my son;  
You far outstrip my spleen in this affair.  
Let us be calm, and hear the abbot's plea 100  
For this intrusion.

LUDOLPH.

I am silent, sire.

OTHO.

Conrad, see all depart not wanted here.  
[*Exeunt Knights, Ladies, &c.*  
Ludolph, be calm. Ethelbert, peace awhile.  
This mystery demands an audience  
Of a just judge, and that will Otho be. 105

LUDOLPH.

Why has he time to breathe another word?

OTHO.

Ludolph, old Ethelbert, be sure, comes not  
To beard us for no cause; he's not the man  
To cry himself up an ambassador  
Without credentials.

LUDOLPH.

I'll chain up myself. 110

OTHO.

Old abbot, stand here forth. Lady Erminia,  
Sit. And now, abbot! what have you to say?

Is her life nothing? Her fair honour nothing?  
Her tears from matins until even-song  
Nothing? Her burst heart nothing? Emperor!  
Is this your gentle niece — the simplest flower  
Of the world's herbal — this fair lilly blanch'd  
Still with the dews of piety, this meek lady  
Here sitting like an angel newly-shent,  
Who veils its snowy wings and grows all pale, —  
Is she nothing?

OTHO.

What more to the purpose, abbot!

LUDOLPH.

Whither is he winding?

CONRAD.

No clue yet!

ETHELBERT.

You have heard, my Liege, and so, no doubt, all he:  
Foul, poisonous, malignant whisperings;  
Nay open speech, rude mockery grown common,  
Against the spotless nature and clear fame  
Of the princess Erminia, your niece.  
I have intruded here thus suddenly,  
Because I hold those base weeds, with tight hand,  
Which now disfigure her fair growing stem,  
Waiting but for your sign to pull them up  
By the dark roots, and leave her palpable,  
To all men's sight, a lady innocent.



SCENE II.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

499

Who, by close stratagems, did save herself,  
Chiefly by shifting to this lady's room  
A rope-ladder for false witness. 145

LUDOLPH.

Most atrocious !

OTHO.

Ethelbert, proceed.

ETHELBERT.

With sad lips I shall:  
For, in the healing of one wound, I fear  
To make a greater. His young highness here  
To-day was married. 150

LUDOLPH.

Good.

ETHELBERT.

Would it were good !  
Yet why do I delay to spread abroad  
The names of those two vipers, from whose jaw  
A deadly breath went forth to taint and blast  
This guileless lady?

OTHO.

Abbot, speak their names 155

ETHELBERT.

A minute first. It cannot be — but may  
I ask, great judge, if you to-day have put  
A letter by unread?

OTHO.

Does 't end in this?

CONRAD.

Out with their names !

ETHELBERT.

Bold sinner, say you so?

LUDOLPH.

Out, hideous monk !



THE CRIME OF PASSING AN ATTAINMENT UPON  
THE SLANDERERS OF THIS VIRGIN.

LUDOLPH.

Speak aloud!

ETHELBERT.

Auranthe, and her brother there.

CONRAD.

Amaze!

LUDOLPH.

Throw them from the windows!

OTHO.

Do what you will!

LUDOLPH.

What shall I do with them?

Something of quick dispatch, for should she hear,  
My soft Auranthe, her sweet mercy would  
Prevail against my fury. Damned priest!  
What swift death wilt thou die? As to the lady  
I touch her not.

ETHELBERT.

Illustrious Otho, stay!  
An ample store of misery thou hast,  
Choak not the granary of thy noble mind



SCENE II.]

OTHO THE GREAT.

501

A young man's heart, by Heaven's blessing, is 180  
A wide world, where a thousand new-born hopes  
Empurple fresh the melancholy blood:  
But an old man's is narrow, tenantless  
Of hopes, and stuff'd with many memories,  
Which, being pleasant, ease the heavy pulse — 185  
Painful, clog up and stagnate. Weigh this matter  
Even as a miser balances his coin;  
And, in the name of mercy, give command  
That your knight Albert be brought here before you.  
He will expound this riddle; he will show 190  
A noon-day proof of bad Auranthe's guilt.

OTHO.

Let Albert straight be summon'd. [*Exit one of the Nobles.*]

LUDOLPH.

Impossible!  
I cannot doubt — I will not — no — to doubt  
Is to be ashes! — wither'd up to death!

OTHO.

My gentle Ludolph, harbour not a fear;  
You do yourself much wrong. 195

LUDOLPH.

O, wretched dolt!  
Now, when my foot is almost on thy neck,  
Wilt thou infuriate me? Proof! Thou fool!  
Why wilt thou tease impossibility,  
With such a thick-skull'd persevering suit? 200  
Fanatic obstinacy! Prodigy!  
Monster of folly! Ghost of a turn'd brain!  
You puzzle me, — you haunt me, — when I dream  
Of you my brain will split! Bold sorcerer!  
Juggler! May I come near you? On my soul 205  
I know not whether to pity, curse, or laugh.

*Enter ALBERT, and the Nobleman.*

Here, Albert, this old phantom wants a proof!  
Give him his proof! A camel's load of proofs!

ERMINIA, our new-spoused daughter?

ALBERT.

You chill me with astonishment. How's this?  
My Liege, what proof should I have 'gainst a fame  
Impossible of slur?

ERMINIA.

O wickedness !

ETHELBERT.

Deluded monarch, 'tis a cruel lie.

OTHO.

Peace, rebel-priest !

CONRAD.

Insult beyond credence !

ERMINIA.

Almost a dream !

LUDOLPH.

We have awaked from  
A foolish dream that from my brow hath wrung  
A wrathful dew. O folly ! why did I  
So act the lion with this silly gnat?  
Let them depart. Lady Erminia !  
I ever griev'd for you, as who did not?  
But now you have, with such a brazen front,  
So most maliciously, so madly strik-



SCENE II.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

503

More than against a nightmare, which a man  
Forgets in the new dawn.

[*Exit LUDOLPH*

OTHO.

Still in extremes! No, they must not be loose.

235

ETHELBERT.

Albert, I must suspect thee of a crime  
So fiendish —

OTHO.

Fear'st thou not my fury, monk?

Conrad, be they in your safe custody  
Till we determine some fit punishment.  
It is so mad a deed, I must reflect

240

And question them in private; for perhaps,  
By patient scrutiny, we may discover  
Whether they merit death, or should be placed  
In care of the physicians.

[*Exeunt OTHO and Nobles, ALBERT following.*

CONRAD.

My guards, ho!

ERMINIA.

Albert, wilt thou follow there?

245

Wilt thou creep dastardly behind his back,  
And shrink away from a weak woman's eye?  
Turn, thou court-Janus! thou forget'st thyself;  
Here is the duke, waiting with open arms,  
To thank thee; here congratulate each other;  
Wring hands; embrace; and swear how lucky 'twas  
That I, by happy chance, hit the right man  
Of all the world to trust in.

[*Enter Guards.*

250

ALBERT.

Trust! to me!

CONRAD (*aside*).

He is the sole one in this mystery.

manacle them both!

ETHELBERT.

I know it — it must be — I see it all!  
Albert, thou art the minion!

ERMINIA.

Ah! too plain —

CONRAD.

Silence! Gag up their mouths! I cannot bear  
More of this brawling. That the Emperor  
Had plac'd you in some other custody!  
Bring them away. *[Exeunt*

ALBERT.

Though my name perish from the book of honour,  
Almost before the recent ink is dry,  
And be no more remember'd after death,  
Than any drummer's in the muster-roll;  
Yet shall I season high my sudden fall  
With triumph o'er that evil-witted duke!  
He shall feel what it is to have the hand  
Of a man drowning, on his hateful throat.

*Enter GERSA and SIGIFRED.*

GERSA.

What discord is at ferment in this house?



SCENE II.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

505

GERSA.

Young Ludolph, like a fiery arrow, shot  
By us.

SIGIFRED.

The Emperor, with cross'd arms, in thought.

GERSA.

In one room music, in another sadness,  
Perplexity every where!

ALBERT.

A trifle more!  
Follow; your presences will much avail  
To tune our jarred spirits. I'll explain.

280  
[*Exeunt.*]

ACT IV.

SCENE I. — AURANTHE'S *Apartment.*

AURANTHE and CONRAD *discovered.*

CONRAD.

Well, well, I know what ugly jeopardy  
We are caged in; you need not pester that  
Into my ears. Prythee, let me be spared  
A foolish tongue, that I may bethink me  
Of remedies with some deliberation.  
You cannot doubt but 'tis in Albert's power  
To crush or save us?

5

AURANTHE.

No, I cannot doubt.  
He has, assure yourself, by some strange means,  
My secret; which I ever hid from him,  
Knowing his mawkish honesty.

CONRAD.

Cursed slave!

CONRAD.

You would not hear my counsel, when his life  
Might have been trodden out, all sure and hush'd;  
Now the dull animal forsooth must be  
Intreated, managed! When can you contrive  
The interview he demands?

AURANTHE.

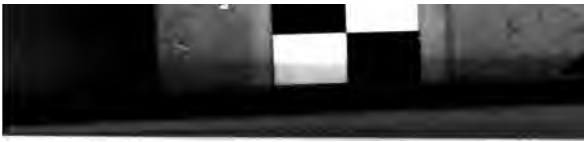
As speedily  
It must be done as my brib'd woman can  
Unseen conduct him to me; but I fear  
'Twill be impossible, while the broad day  
Comes through the panes with persecuting glare.  
Me thinks, if 't now were night I could intrigue  
With darkness, bring the stars to second me,  
And settle all this trouble.

CONRAD.

Nonsense! Child!  
See him immediately; why not now?

AURANTHE.

Do you forget that even the senseless door-posts  
Are on the watch and gape through all the house?  
How many whisperers there are about,  
Hungry for evidence to ruin me;



SCENE I.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

507

CONRAD.

Well, suppose this Albert here;  
What is your power with him?

AURANTHE.

He should be  
My echo, my taught parrot ! but I fear 40  
He will be cur enough to bark at me ;  
Have his own say ; read me some silly creed  
'Bout shame and pity.

CONRAD.

What will you do then?

AURANTHE.

What I shall do, I know not : what I would  
Cannot be done ; for see, this chamber-floor 45  
Will not yield to the pick-axe and the spade, —  
Here is no quiet depth of hollow ground.

CONRAD.

Sister, you have grown sensible and wise,  
Seconding, ere I speak it, what is now,  
I hope, resolv'd between us.

AURANTHE.

Say, what is't? 50

CONRAD.

You need not be his sexton too : a man  
May carry that with him shall make him die  
Elsewhere, — give that to him ; pretend the while  
You will to-morrow succumb to his wishes,  
Be what they may, and send him from the Castle 55  
On some fool's errand ; let his latest groan  
Frighten the wolves !

AURANTHE.

Alas ! he must not die !



I no' I alone were taken in these toils,  
And you could free me ; but remember, sir,  
You live alone in my security :  
So keep your wits at work, for your own sake,  
Not mine, and be more mannerly.

CONRAD.

Thou wasp!  
If my domains were emptied of these folk,  
And I had thee to starve —

AURANTHE.

O, marvellous !  
But Conrad, now be gone ; the Host is look'd for ;  
Cringe to the Emperor, entertain the Lords,  
And, do ye mind, above all things, proclaim  
My sickness, with a brother's sadden'd eye,  
Condoling with Prince Ludolph. In fit time  
Return to me.

CONRAD.

I leave you to your thoughts.

AURANTHE (*sola*).

Down, down, proud temper ! down, Auranthe's pride  
Why do I anger him when I should kneel ?  
Conrad ! Albert ! help ! help ! What can I do ?  
O wretched woman ! lost, wreck'd, swallow'd up,  
Accursed, blasted ! O, thou golden Crown,  
Orbing along the serene firmament



SCENE I.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

509

Thee to melt in the visionary air, 85  
Ere, by one grasp, this common hand is made  
Imperial? I do not know the time  
When I have wept for sorrow; but methinks  
I could now sit upon the ground, and shed  
Tears, tears of misery. O, the heavy day! 90  
How shall I bear my life till Albert comes?  
Ludolph! Erminia! Proofs! O heavy day!  
Bring me some mourning weeds, that I may 'tire  
Myself, as fits one wailing her own death:  
Cut off these curls, and brand this lilly hand, 95  
And throw these jewels from my loathing sight, —  
Fetch me a missal, and a string of beads, —  
A cup of bitter'd water, and a crust, —  
I will confess, O holy Abbot! — How!  
What is this? Auranthe! thou fool, dolt, 100  
Whimpering idiot! up! up! and quell!  
I am safe! Coward! why am I in fear?  
Albert! he cannot stickle, chew the cud  
In such a fine extreme, — impossible!  
Who knocks? 105

*[Goes to the Door, listens, and opens it.]*

*Enter ALBERT.*

Albert, I have been waiting for you here  
With such an aching heart, such swooning throbs  
On my poor brain, such cruel — cruel sorrow,  
That I should claim your pity! Art not well?

ALBERT.

Yes, lady, well.

AURANTHE.

You look not so, alas! 110  
But pale, as if you brought some heavy news.

ALBERT.

You know full well what makes me look so pale.

AURANTHE.

No! Do I? Surely I am still to learn  
Some horror; all I know, this present, is  
I am near hustled to a dangerous gulph, 115

Which you can save me from — and therefore safe,  
So trusting in thy love: that should not make  
Thee pale, my Albert.

ALBERT.

It doth make me freeze.

AURANTHE.

Why should it, love?

ALBERT.

You should not ask me that,  
But make your own heart monitor, and save  
Me the great pain of telling. You must know.

120

AURANTHE.

Something has vext you, Albert. There are times  
When simplest things put on a sombre cast:  
A melancholy mood will haunt a man,  
Until most easy matters take the shape  
Of unachievable tasks: small rivalets  
Then seem impassable.

125

ALBERT.

Do not cheat yourself  
With hope that gloss of words, or suppliant action,  
Or tears, or ravings, or self-threaten'd death,  
Can alter my resolve.

AURANTHE.

You make me tremble;  
Not so much at your threats, as at your voice,  
Untun'd, and harsh, and barren of all love.

130

ALBERT.

You suffocate me! Stop this devil's parley,  
And listen to me: know me once for all.

AURANTHE.

I thought I did. Alas! I am deceiv'd.

135

ALBERT.

No, you are not deceiv'd. You took me for  
A man detesting all inhuman crime;



SCENE I.]

*OTHO THE GREAT.*

511

And therefore kept from me your demon's plot  
Against Erminia. Silent? Be so still;  
For ever! Speak no more; but hear my words, 140  
Thy fate. Your safety I have bought to-day  
By blazoning a lie, which in the dawn  
I'll expiate with truth.

AURANTHE.

O cruel traitor!

ALBERT.

For I would not set eyes upon thy shame;  
I would not see thee dragg'd to death by the hair,  
Penanc'd, and taunted on a scaffolding! 145  
To-night, upon the skirts of the blind wood  
That blackens northward of these horrid towers,  
I wait for you with horses. Choose your fate.  
Farewell.

AURANTHE.

Albert, you jest; I'm sure you must. 150  
You, an ambitious Soldier! I, a Queen,  
One who could say, — Here, rule these Provinces!  
Take tribute from those cities for thyself!  
Empty these armouries, these treasuries,  
Muster thy warlike thousands at a nod! 155  
Go! conquer Italy!

ALBERT.

Auranthe, you have made  
The whole world chaff to me. Your doom is fix'd.

AURANTHE.

O'ut, villain! dastard!

ALBERT.

Look there to the door!

Who is it?

AURANTHE.

Conrad, traitor!

ALBERT.

Let him in.

[Enter CONRAD

Do not affect amazement, hypocrite,  
At seeing me in this chamber. 160

CONRAD.  
Auranthe?

ALBERT.  
Talk not with eyes, but speak your curses out  
Against me, who would sooner crush and grind  
A brace of toads, than league with them t' oppress  
An innocent lady, gull an Emperor, 165  
More generous to me than autumn sun  
To ripening harvests.

AURANTHE.  
No more insult, sir!

ALBERT.  
Aye, clutch your scabbard; but, for prudence sake,  
Draw not the sword; 'twould make an uproar, Duke,  
You would not hear the end of. At nightfall 170  
Your lady sister, if I guess aright,  
Will leave this busy castle. You had best  
Take farewell too of worldly vanities.

CONRAD.  
Vassal!

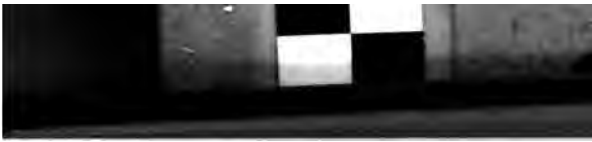
ALBERT.  
To-morrow, when the Emperor sends  
For loving Conrad, see you fawn on him. 175  
Good even!

AURANTHE.  
You'll be seen!

ALBERT.  
See the coast clear then.

AURANTHE (*as he goes*).  
Remorseless Albert! Cruel, cruel wretch!

[*She lets him out*



CONRAD.

So, we must lick the dust?

AURANTHE.

I follow him.

CONRAD.

How? Where? The plan of your escape?

AURANTHE.

He waits

For me with horses by the forest-side,  
Northward.

180

CONRAD.

Good, good! he dies. You go, say you?

AURANTHE.

Perforce.

CONRAD.

Be speedy, darkness! Till that comes,  
Fiends keep you company!

[Exit.

AURANTHE.

And you! And you!

And all men! Vanish!

[Retires to an inner Apartment.

SCENE II. — *An Apartment in the Castle.**Enter LUDOLPH and Page.*

PAGE.

Still very sick my Lord; but now I went  
Knowing my duty to so good a Prince;

---

The second of the fragments of the manuscript mentioned at page 452 begins with the opening of Scene II, Act IV. I have adopted many minor variations of text which need not be specified; but I may note at starting that line 2 is not given in previous editions.

By any instance, but with gentlest force  
Break through her weeping servants, till thou com'st  
E'en to her chamber door, and there fair Boy,  
If with thy mother's milk thou hast suck'd in  
Any diviner eloquence; woo her ears  
With plaints for me more tender than the voice  
Of dying Echo, echoed.

PAGE.

Kindest master!

To know thee sad thus, will unloose my tongue  
In mournful syllables. Let but my words reach  
Her ears and she shall take them coupled with  
Moans from my heart and sighs not counterfeit.  
May I speed better!

LUDOLPH.

Auranthe! My Life!

Long have I lov'd thee, yet till now not lov'd:  
Remembering, as I do, hard-hearted times  
When I had heard even of thy death perhaps,  
And thoughtless, suffered to pass alone  
Into Elysium! now I follow thee  
A shadow or a substance, whereso'er  
Thou leadest me, — whether thy white feet press,

---

(7) Cancelled reading, *for me* in place of *prythee*.

(14) Cancelled reading,

Of dying echo, echoed at her death...

(15) Cancelled reading, *To see thee sad touches...*

(24-5) Cancelled reading,



With pleasant weight, the amorous-aching earth,  
Or thro' the air thou pioneerest me,  
A shade! Yet sadly I predestinate!  
O unbenignest Love, why wilt thou let  
Darkness steal out upon the sleepy world  
So wearily; as if night's chariot wheels  
Were clog'd in some thick cloud. O, changeful Love,  
Let not her steeds with drowsy-footed pace  
Pass the high stars, before sweet embassy  
Comes from the pillow'd beauty of that fair  
Completion of all delicate nature's wit.  
Pout her faint lips anew with rubious health  
And with thine infant fingers lit the fringe  
Of her sick eyelids; that those eyes may glow  
With wooing light upon me, ere the Morn  
Peers with disrelish, grey, barren, and cold.

*Enter GERSA and Courtiers.*

Otho calls me his Lion — should I blush  
To be so tam'd, so ——

GERSA.

Do me the courtesy

Gentlemen to pass on.

COURTIER.

We are your servants. 45  
[*Exeunt Courtiers.*]

LUDOLPH.

It seems then Sir you have found out the Man  
You would confer with; me?

---

(30) Rejected reading, *unpropitious love*.

(32) The word *heavily* stands cancelled here for *wearily*.

(34-7) This passage originally stood thus:

Let her not take her drowsy-eyed watch  
Among the stars, before sweet embassy  
Comes from the pillow'd beauty of that fair  
Completion of all fairness and all form.

(42) Cancelled reading, *Comes for Peers*. It should be mentioned that, throughout the fragments of the manuscript, the name *Gerza* almost invariably occurs in place of *Gersa*.



Soe'er I shall be honour'd.

GERSA.

I not less.

LUDOLPH.

What may it be? No trifle can take place  
Of such deliberate prologue, serious 'haviour.  
But be it what it may I cannot fail  
To listen with no common interest —  
For though so new your presence is to me,  
I have a soldier's friendship for your fame —  
Please you explain.

GERSA.

As thus — for, pardon me,  
I cannot in plain terms grossly assault  
A noble nature; and would faintly sketch  
What your quick apprehension will fill up  
So finely I esteem you.

LUDOLPH.

I attend —

GERSA.

Your generous Father, most illustrious Otho,  
Sits in the Banquet room among his Chiefs --  
His wine is bitter, for you are not there  
His eyes are fix'd still on the open doors,  
And every passer in he frowns upon  
Seeing no Ludolph comes.

LUDOLPH.

I do neglect —

GERSA.

And for your absence, may I guess the cause?

LUDOLPH.

Stay there ! no — guess? more princely you must be —  
Than to make guesses at me. 'Tis enough,  
I'm sorry I can hear no more.

70

GERSA.

And I

As griev'd to force it on you so abrupt ;  
Yet one day you must know a grief whose sting  
Will sharpen more the longer 'tis conceal'd.

LUDOLPH.

Say it at once, sir, dead, dead, is she dead?

75

GERSA.

Mine is a cruel task : she is not dead —  
And would for your sake she were innocent —

LUDOLPH.

Thou liest ! thou amazest me beyond  
All scope of thought ; convulseth my heart's blood  
To deadly churning — Gersa you are young  
As I am ; let me observe you face to face ;  
Not grey-brow'd like the poisonous Ethelbert,  
No rheum'd eyes, no frowning of age,  
No wrinkles where all vices nestle in  
Like crannied vermin — no, but fresh and young

80

85

(73) The word *bulk* is here rejected for *sting*.

(78) This line stands in Lord Houghton's editions thus —

Hungarian! Thou amazest me beyond...

In the manuscript there is a cancelled reading —

Thou liest! and such a lie...

But finally it stands as in the text without any trace of *Hungari*

My wrath against thee for the orb'd world.

LUDOLPH.

Your wrath weak boy? Tremble at mine unless  
Retraction follow close upon the heels  
Of that late stounding insult: why has my sword  
Not done already a sheer judgment on thee?  
Despair, or eat thy words. Why, thou wast nigh  
Whimpering away my reason: hark ye, Sir,  
It is no secret; — that Erminia  
Erminia Sir, was hidden in your tent;  
O bless'd asylum! comfortable home!  
Begone, I pity thee, thou art a Gull! —  
Erminia's last new puppet —

GERSA.

Furious fire  
Thou mak'st me boil as hot as thou canst flame!  
And in thy teeth I give thee back the lie!  
Thou liest! Thou, Auranthe's fool, A wittol —

LUDOLPH.

Look! look at this bright sword  
There is no part of it to the very hilt  
But shall indulge itself about thine heart —  
Draw — but remember thou must cower thy plumes.  
As yesterday the Arab made thee stoop —

---

GERSA.

Patience! not here, I would not spill thy blood  
Here underneath this roof where Otho breathes,  
Thy father — almost mine —

LUDOLPH.

O faltering Coward —

*Re-enter PAGE.*

Stay, stay, here is one I have half a word with —  
Well — What ails thee child?

115

PAGE.

My lord,

LUDOLPH.

Good fellow!

PAGE.

They are fled!

LUDOLPH.

They — who?

PAGE.

When anxiously

I hasten'd back, your grieving messenger,  
I found the stairs all dark, the lamps extinct,  
And not a foot or whisper to be heard.

120

I thought her dead, and on the lowest step  
Sat listening; when presently came by  
Two muffled up, — one sighing heavily,  
The other cursing low, whose voice I knew  
For the duke Conrad's. Close I follow'd them  
Thro' the dark ways they chose to the open air;  
And, as I follow'd, heard my lady speak.

125

LUDOLPH.

Thy life answers the truth!

---

(116) Lord Houghton reads *What wouldst say?* in place of *Good fellow!* The second fragment of the manuscript ends with line 117.

**GERSA.**

**Be calm in this.**

**LUDOLPH.**

I am.

**GERSA.**

And Albert too has disappear'd;  
Ere I met you, I sought him everywhere;  
You would not hearken.

**LUDOLPH.**

Which way went they, be

**GERSA.**

I'll hunt with you.

**LUDOLPH.**

No, no, no. My senses are  
Still whole. I have surviv'd. My arm is strong —  
My appetite sharp — for revenge! I'll no sharer  
In my feast; my injury is all my own,  
And so is my revenge, my lawful chattels!  
Terrier, ferret them out! Burn — burn the witch!  
Trace me their footsteps! Away!

## ACT V.

SCENE I. — *A part of the Forest.**Enter CONRAD and AURANTHE.*

AURANTHE.

Go no further ; not a step more ; thou art  
 A master-plague in the midst of miseries.  
 Go — I fear thee. I tremble every limb,  
 Who never shook before. There's moody death  
 In thy resolved looks — Yes, I could kneel  
 To pray thee far away. Conrad, go, go —  
 There ! yonder underneath the boughs I see  
 Our horses !

5

CONRAD.

Aye, and the man.

AURANTHE.

Yes, he is there.

Go, go — no blood, no blood, go gentle Conrad !

CONRAD.

Farewell !

AURANTHE.

Farewell, for this Heaven pardon you.

10

[*Exit AURANTHE.*]

The third fragment of the manuscript begins with the opening of the fifth act ; and the greater part of the act is preserved. This is so far fortunate, in that Brown attributes this act to the unprompted imagination of Keats. He seems to have taken great pains with this part of the work, as there is evidence indicating that a good deal must have been wholly re-written before the version given among the Literary Remains was arrived at. That version is of course adopted in the main here ; but I have accommodated some minor details to the manuscript.

(1-2) There is a cancelled reading here —

you are  
 A plague-spot in the midst of miseries.

(8) The manuscript reads *Aye and a Man.*

(10-12) The word *then* is cancelled after *Farewell*, and Conrad's final speech begins thus in the manuscript —

If he escape me may I die { <sup>a</sup> } death  
 Of unimagined tortures...





SCENE II.]

OTHO THE GREAT.

523

Stifed beneath the thick oppressive shade  
Of these dull boughs, — this oven of dark thickets, — 20  
Silent, — without revenge? — pshaw! — bitter end, —  
A bitter death, — a suffocating death, —  
A gnawing — silent — deadly, quiet death!  
Escap'd? — fled? — vanish'd? melted into air?  
She's gone! I cannot clutch her! no revenge! 25  
A muffled death, ensnar'd in horrid silence!  
Suck'd to my grave amid a dreamy calm!  
O, where is that illustrious noise of war,  
To smother up this sound of labouring breath,  
This rustle of the trees!

[AURANTHE shrieks at a distance.

PAGE.

My Lord, a noise! 30  
This way — hark!

LUDOLPH.

Yes, yes! A hope! A music!  
A glorious clamour! How I live again! [Exeunt.

SCENE II. — *Another part of the Forest.*

*Enter ALBERT (wounded).*

ALBERT.

O for enough life to support me on  
To Otho's feet —

*Enter LUDOLPH.*

LUDOLPH.

Thrice villainous, stay there!  
Tell me where that detested woman is  
Or this is through thee!

ALBERT.

My good Prince, with me  
The sword has done its worst; not without worst 5



Albert !

LUDOLPH.

Ha! There! there! — He is the paramour  
There — hug him — dying! O, thou innocence,  
Shrine him and comfort him at his last gasp,  
Kiss down his eyelids! Was he not thy love?  
Wilt thou forsake him at his latest hour?  
Keep fearful and aloof from his last gaze,  
His most uneasy moments, when cold death  
Stands with the door ajar to let him in?

ALBERT.

O that that door with hollow slam would close  
Upon me sudden, for I cannot meet,  
In all the unknown chambers of the dead,  
Such horrors —

LUDOLPH.

Auranthe! what can he mean?  
What horrors? Is it not a joyous time?  
Am I not married to a paragon  
“Of personal beauty and untainted soul?”  
A blushing fair-ey'd Purity! A Sylph,  
Whose snowy timid hand has never sin'd  
Beyond a flower pluck'd, white as itself?  
Albert you do insult my Bride — your Mistress —  
To talk of horrors on our wedding-night.

---

(7) The stage direction *Enter Auranthe* is struck out in the man  
of *Auranthe rushes in*; and the next speech of Ludolph is not in ti

ALBERT.

Alas ! poor Prince, I would you knew my heart.  
'Tis not so guilty —

LUDOLPH.

Hear you he pleads not guilty —  
You are not? or if so what matters it? 3c  
You have escap'd me, — free as the dusk air —  
Hid in the forest — safe from my revenge ;  
I cannot catch you — You should laugh at me,  
Poor cheated Ludolph, — make the forest hiss  
With jeers at me — You tremble ; faint at once, 35  
You will come to again. O Cockatrice,  
I have you. Whither wander those fair eyes  
To entice the Devil to your help that he  
May change you to a Spider, so to crawl  
Into some cranny to escape my wrath? 40

ALBERT.

Sometimes the counsel of a dying man  
Doth operate quietly when his breath is gone —  
Disjoin those hands — part — part, do not destroy  
Each other — forget her — our miseries  
Are equal shar'd, and mercy is —

LUDOLPH.

A boon 45  
When one can compass it. Auranthe, try  
Your oratory — your breath is not so hitch'd —  
Aye, stare for help —

[ALBERT *groans and dies*

There goes a spotted soul  
Howling in vain along the hollow night —  
Hear him — he calls you — Sweet Auranthe come ! 50

(45) The word *almost* stands before *equal* in the manuscript, somewhat to the detriment of the metre.

(47) There is a cancelled reading here, *short* for *hitch'd*. In former editions the next stage direction is simply *Albert dies*.

(49) In the manuscript, *about* stands cancelled in favour of *along*. The stage direction with which the next scene opens is —

Scene 2nd — A court yard before one of the castle doors.  
enter three gentlemen meeting.

The speakers' names appear throughout the scene as *1st Gent.*, *2nd Gent.*, and *3rd Gent.* Lord Houghton's editions have the direction as in the text; but *1st Knight* stands for *Theodore*, perhaps through an oversight of Keats's.



Kill me.

AURANTHE.

LUDOLPH.

No, What, upon our Marriage-night!  
 The earth would shudder at so foul a deed —  
 A fair Bride, a sweet Bride, an innocent Bride!  
 No, we must revel it, as 'tis in use  
 In times of delicate brilliant ceremony:  
 Come, let me lead you to our halls again —  
 Nay, linger not — make no resistance sweet —  
 Will you — Ah wretch, thou canst not, for I have  
 The strength of twenty lions 'gainst a lamb —  
 Now one adieu for Albert — come away. —

55

60

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III. — *An inner Court of the Castle.*

*Enter SIGIFRED, GONFRED, and THEODORE meeting.*

THEODORE.

Was ever such a night?

SIGIFRED.

What horrors more?

Things unbeliev'd one hour, so strange they are,  
 The next hour stamps with credit.

THEODORE.

Your last news?

GONFRED.

After the Page's story of the death  
 Of Albert and Duke Conrad?

SIGIFRED.

And the return  
 Of Ludolph with the Princess.

5

---

(a) There is a cancelled reading here, *Things unbeliev'd for strangeness.*



GONFRED.

No more save  
Prince Gersa's freeing Abbot Ethelbert,  
And the sweet lady fair Erminia,  
From prison.

THEODORE.

Where are they now? hast yet heard?

GONFRED.

With the sad Emperor they are closeted;  
I saw the three pass slowly up the stairs  
The lady weeping, the old Abbot cowl'd.

10

SIGIFRED.

What next?

THEODORE.

I ache to think on't.

GONFRED.

'Tis with fate.

THEODORE.

One while these proud towers are hush'd as death.

GONFRED.

The next our poor Prince fills the arched rooms  
With ghastly ravings.

15

SIGIFRED.

I do fear his brain.

GONFRED.

I will see more. Bear you so stout a heart?

[*Exeunt into the Castle.*]

(14) The word *minute*, is here struck out in favour of *while*, somewhat to the detriment of the metre. The last stage direction to this scene is *they go in*.

Have ye no comfort for me, ye Physicians  
Of the weak Body and Soul?

ETHELBERT.

'Tis not the Medicine  
Either of heaven or earth can cure unless  
Fit time be chosen to administer —

OTHO.

A kind forbearance, holy Abbot — come  
Erminia, here sit by me, gentle Girl;  
Give me thy hand — hast thou forgiven me?

ERMINIA.

Would I were with the saints to pray for you!

OTHO.

Why will ye keep me from my darling child?

PHYSICIAN.

Forgive me, but he must not see thy face —

OTHO.

Is then a father's countenance a Gorgon?  
Hath it not comfort in it? Would it not  
Console my poor Boy, cheer him, heal his spirits?  
Let me embrace him, let me speak to him —  
I will —



PHYSICIAN.

You may not Sire — 'twould overwhelm him quite,  
He is so full of grief and passionate wrath,  
Too heavy a sigh would kill him — or do worse.  
He must be sav'd by fine contrivances — 20  
And most especially we must keep clear  
Out of his sight a Father whom he loves —  
His heart is full, it can contain no more,  
And do its ruddy office.

ETHELBERT.

Sage advice,  
We must endeavour how to ease and slacken 25  
The tight-wound energies of his despair,  
Not make them tenser —

OTHO.

Enough! I hear, I hear.  
Yet you were about to advise more — I listen.

ETHELBERT.

This learned doctor will agree with me,  
That not in the smallest point should he be thwarted 30  
Or gainsaid by one word — his very motions,  
Nods, becks and hints, should be obey'd with care,  
Even on the moment: so his troubled mind  
May cure itself —

PHYSICIAN.

There is no other means.

OTHO.

Open the door; let's hear if all is quiet — 35

PHYSICIAN.

Beseech you Sire, forbear.

ERMINIA.

Do, do.

---

(26) In the manuscript, *hot soul* is struck out in favour of *despair*.

Here's a health !

Fill, fill my goblet, —

ERMINIA.

O, close the door.

OTHO.

Let, let me hear his voice ; this cannot last —  
And fain would I catch up his dying words  
Though my own knell they be — this cannot last  
O let me catch his voice — for lo ! I hear  
This silence whisper me that he is dead !  
It is so. Gersa?

*Enter GERSA.*

PHYSICIAN.

Say, how fares the prince?

GERSA.

More calm — his features are less wild and flush'd  
Once he complain'd of weariness —

PHYSICIAN.

Indeed !

'Tis good — 'tis good — let him but fall asleep,  
That saves him.

---

(37) In the manuscript —

Open { it straight } — st — quiet — my lost Re  
      { the Door }



OTHO.

Gersa, watch him like a child —  
Ward him from harm — and bring me better news 50

PHYSICIAN.

Humour him to the height. I fear to go;  
For should he catch a glimpse of my dull garb,  
It might affright him — fill him with suspicion  
That we believe him sick, which must not be —

GERSA.

I will invent what soothing means I can. 55  
[Exit GERSA.]

PHYSICIAN.

This should cheer up your Highness — weariness  
Is a good symptom, and most favourable —  
It gives me pleasant hopes. Please you walk forth  
Onto the Terrace; the refreshing air  
Will blow one half of your sad doubts away. 60  
[Exeunt.]

---

(51) Originally, Gersa was made to strike in here after *height* —

It shall be done  
But for myself I keep me from his sight.

(55) Cancelled reading —

I will not be remiss — obey your wishes.

*exit — scene changes.*

(56) In the manuscript, *this weariness*; and of the next line there is a rejected reading —

Is a most gentle symptom, of the best...

(59) In previous editions *Upon the terrace*. The long stage direction opening the next scene is wanting in the manuscript; and the first two speakers are *1st Lord* and *2nd Lord*.



FIRST KNIGHT.

Grievously are we tantaliz'd, one and all —  
Sway'd here and there, commanded to and fro  
As though we were the shadows of a dream  
And link'd to a sleeping fancy. What do we he

GONFRED.

I am no Seer — you know we must obey  
The prince from A to Z — though it should be  
To set the place in flames. I pray hast heard  
Where the most wicked Princess is?

FIRST KNIGHT.

There, Sir,  
In the next room — have you remark'd those two  
Stout soldiers posted at the door?

GONFRED.

For what?

FIRST LADY.

How ghast a train!

SECOND LADY.

Sure this should be some splendid burial.

FIRST LADY.

What fearful whispering! See, see, — Gersa then

---



*Enter GERSA.*

GERSA.

Put on your brightest looks ; smile if you can ;  
Behave as all were happy ; keep your eyes 15  
From the least watch upon him ; if he speaks  
To any one, answer collectedly,  
Without surprise, his questions, howe'er strange.  
Do this to the utmost, — though, alas ! with me  
The remedy grows hopeless ! Here he comes, — 20  
Observe what I have said, — show no surprise.

*Enter LUDOLPH, followed by SIGIFRED and Page.*

LUDOLPH.

A splendid company ! rare beauties here !  
I should have Orphean lips, and Plato's fancy,  
Amphion's utterance, toned with his lyre,  
Or the deep key of Jove's sonorous mouth, 25  
To give fit salutation. Methought I heard,  
As I came in, some whispers, — what of that ?  
'Tis natural men should whisper ; at the kiss  
Of Psyche given by Love, there was a buzz  
Among the gods ! — and silence is as natural. 30  
These draperies are fine, and, being a mortal,  
I should desire no better ; yet, in truth,  
There must be some superior costliness,  
Some wider-domed high magnificence !  
I would have, as a mortal I may not, 35  
Hanging of heaven's clouds, purple and gold,  
Slung from the spheres ; gauzes of silver mist,  
Loop'd up with cords of twisted wreathed light,  
And tassell'd round with weeping meteors !  
These pendent lamps and chandeliers are bright 40  
As earthly fires from dull dross can be cleansed ;  
Yet could my eyes drink up intenser beams  
Undazzled, — this is darkness, — when I close  
These lids, I see far fiercer brilliances, —  
Skies full of splendid moons, and shooting stars, 45  
And spouting exhalations, diamond fires,  
And panting fountains quivering with deep glows !  
Yes — this is dark — is it not dark ?

SIGIFRED.

My Lord,

'Tis late ; the lights of festival are ever  
Quench'd in the morn.

LUDOLPH.

'Tis not to-morrow then?

50

SIGIFRED.

'Tis early dawn.

GERSA.

Indeed full time we slept ;  
Say you so, Prince?

LUDOLPH.

I say I quarrell'd with you ;  
We did not tilt each other, — that's a blessing, —  
Good gods ! no innocent blood upon my head !

SIGIFRED.

Retire, Gersa !

LUDOLPH.

There should be three more here :  
For two of them, they stay away perhaps,  
Being gloomy-minded, haters of fair revels, —  
They know their own thoughts best.

55

As for the third,

Deep blue eyes — semi-shaded in white lids,  
Finish'd with lashes fine for more soft shade,  
Completed by her twin-arch'd ebon brows —  
White temples of exactest elegance,  
Of even mould felicitous and smooth —  
Cheeks fashion'd tenderly on either side,  
So perfect, so divine that our poor eyes  
Are dazzled with the sweet proportioning,  
And wonder that 'tis so, — the magic chance !  
Her nostrils, small, fragrant, faery-delicate ;  
Her lips — I swear no human bones e'er wore

60

65

(59) A fresh fragment of the manuscript opens with this description of Auranthe ; but the lines occur in an entirely different order : the sequence is — lines 71-2, 67-8, 59-66, 69-70 ; and Keats doubtless saw the artistic improvement to be compassed by transposition. In line 59 *with* stands cancelled in favour of *is*.



SCENE V.]

OTHO THE GREAT.

535

So taking a disguise — you shall behold her! 70  
We'll have her presently; aye, you shall see her,  
And wonder at her, friends, she is so fair —  
She is the world's chief Jewel, and by heaven  
She's mine by right of marriage — she is mine!  
Patience, good people, in fit time I send 75  
A Summoner — she will obey my call,  
Being a wife most mild and dutiful.  
First I would hear what music is prepared  
To herald and receive her — let me hear!

SIGIFRED.

Bid the musicians soothe him tenderly. 80  
[*A soft strain of Music.*]

LUDOLPH.

Ye have none better — no — I am content;  
'Tis a rich sobbing melody, with reliefs  
Full and majestic; it is well enough,  
And will be sweeter, when ye see her pace  
Sweeping into this presence, glisten'd o'er 85  
With emptied caskets, and her train upheld  
By ladies, habited in robes of lawn,  
Sprinkled with golden crescents; (others bright  
In silks, with spangles shower'd,) and bow'd to  
By Duchesses and pearled Margravines — 90  
Sad, that the fairest creature of the earth —  
I pray you mind me not — 'tis sad, I say,  
That the extremest beauty of the world  
Should so entrench herself away from me,  
Behind a barrier of engender'd guilt! 95

SECOND LADY.

Ah! what a moan!

FIRST KNIGHT.

Most piteous indeed!

LUDOLPH.

She shall be brought before this company,  
And then — then —

---

(90) The fragment of manuscript last mentioned does not extend further into the speech, and is mutilated here; but traces of some different conduct of the dialogue are preserved in the words *he bursts in tears!* and *doth he not weep?*

FIRST LADY.

He muses.

GERSA.

O, Fortune, where will this end?

SIGIFRED.

I guess his purpose! Indeed he must not have  
That pestilence brought in, — that cannot be, 100  
There we must stop him.

GERSA.

I am lost! Hush, hush!

He is about to rave again.

LUDOLPH.

A barrier of guilt! I was the fool,  
She was the cheater! Who's the cheater now,  
And who the fool? The entrapp'd, the caged fool, 105  
The bird-lim'd raven? She shall croak to death  
Secure! Methinks I have her in my fist,  
To crush her with my heel! Wait, wait! I marvel  
My father keeps away: good friend, ah! Sigifred!  
Do bring him to me — and Erminia 110  
I fain would see before I sleep — and Ethelbert,  
That he may bless me, as I know he will  
Though I have curs'd him.

SIGIFRED.

Rather suffer me

To lead you to them —

LUDOLPH.

No, excuse me, no —

The day is not quite done — go bring them hither. 115

[Exit SIGIFRED.]

Certes a father's smile should, like sun light,  
Slant on my sheafed harvest of ripe bliss —

(109) There is a further fragment of the manuscript extending from *My father* to *he enters now* (line 137).

(111) In the manuscript, *holy Ethelbert*.

(117) In the manuscript, *gather'd* is struck out in favour of *sheafed* not *sheaved* as in former editions.



Besides I thirst to pledge my lovely Bride  
 In a deep goblet: let me see — what wine?  
 The strong Iberian juice, or mellow Greek? 120  
 Or pale Calabrian? Or the Tuscan grape?  
 Or of old Ætna's pulpy wine presses,  
 Black stain'd with the fat vintage, as it were  
 The purple slaughter-house, where Bacchus' self  
 Prick'd his own swollen veins? Where is my Page?

PAGE.

Here, here! 125

LUDOLPH.

Be ready to obey me; anon thou shalt  
 Bear a soft message for me — for the hour  
 Draws near when I must make a winding up  
 Of bridal Mysteries — a fine-spun vengeance!  
 Carve it on my Tomb, that when I rest beneath 130  
 Men shall confess — This Prince was gull'd and cheated  
 But from the ashes of disgrace he rose  
 More than a fiery Phœnix — and did burn  
 His ignominy up in purging fires —  
 Did I not send, Sir, but a moment past, 135  
 For my Father?

GERSA.

You did.

LUDOLPH.

Perhaps 'twould be  
 Much better he came not.

GERSA.

He enters now!

*Enter OTHO, ERMINIA, ETHELBERT, SIGIFRED, and Physician.*

LUDOLPH.

O thou good Man, against whose sacred head  
 I was a mad conspirator, chiefly too

(128) The word *righteous* is cancelled before *winding up*.(133) In former editions, *dragon* in place of *Phœnix*.(136) Instead of *Gersa* we have *1st Lord* here in the manuscript, and *Lord* before the next speech but one.

(138-41) These four lines are written upon the back of the fragment belonging to the first Act,

Join a loud voice to mine, and so denounce  
What I alone will execute!

OTHO.

Dear son,  
What is it? By your father's love, I sue  
That it be nothing merciless!

LUDOLPH.

To that demon  
Not so! No! She is in temple-stall  
Being garnish'd for the sacrifice, and I,  
The Priest of Justice, will immolate her  
Upon the altar of wrath! She stings me thro'  
Even as the worm doth feed upon the nut,  
So she, a scorpion, preys upon my brain!  
I feel her gnawing here! Let her but vanish,  
Then, father, I will lead your legions forth,  
Compact in steeled squares, and speared files,  
And bid our trumpets speak a fell rebuke  
To nations drows'd in peace!

OTHO.

To-morrow, So  
Be your word law — forget to-day —

LUDOLPH.

I will  
When I have finish'd it — now! now! I'm pig  
Tight-footed for the deed!



SCENE V.]

OTHO THE GREAT.

539

ERMINIA.

Alas! Alas!

165

LUDOLPH.

What Angel's voice is that? Erminia!  
Ah! gentlest creature, whose sweet innocence  
Was almost murder'd; I am penitent,  
Wilt thou forgive me? And thou, holy Man,  
Good Ethelbert, shall I die in peace with you?

170

ERMINIA.

Die, my lord!

LUDOLPH.

I feel it possible.

OTHO.

Physician?

PHYSICIAN.

I fear me he is past my skill.

OTHO.

Not so!

LUDOLPH.

I see it, I see it — I have been wandering —  
Half-mad — not right here — I forget my purpose.  
Bestir, bestir, Auranthe! ha! ha! ha!  
Youngster! Page! go bid them drag her to me!  
Obey! This shall finish it!

175

[*Draws a dagger.*]

OTHO.

O my Son! my Son!

SIGIFRED.

This must not be — stop there!

---

(171) These speeches, — *Physician?* — and the next two, — are wanting; but there are marks in the manuscript probably referring to the back of some other leaf. The same thing occurs in regard to lines 178 to 180.



LUDOLPH.

Am I obey'd?  
A little talk with her — no harm — haste! haste!

[Exit Page.

Set her before me — never fear I can strike.

180

SEVERAL VOICES.

My Lord! My Lord!

GERSA.

Good Prince!

LUDOLPH.

Why do ye trouble me? out — out — out away!  
There she is! take that! and that! no, no —  
That's not well done — Where is she?

[The doors open. Enter Page. Several women are  
seen grouped about Auranthe in the inner room.

PAGE.

Alas! My Lord, my Lord! they cannot move her!  
Her arms are stiff, — her fingers clench'd and cold —

185

LUDOLPH.

She's dead!

[Staggers and falls into their arms.

ETHELBERT.

Take away the dagger.

GERSA.

Softly; so!

(184) Instead of the stage direction here, the manuscript has *Page returns with one of Auranthe's women.*

(185) Cancelled reading, *we for they.*

(187) The tragedy seems to have been wound up more rapidly at first; for in the manuscript — immediately after *She's dead!* — the following words stand cancelled:

I am content — Nobles good night  
I will to bed tomorrow —

*falls and dies.*



SCENE V.]

OTHO THE GREAT.

541

OTHO.

Thank God for that !

SIGIFRED.

I fear it could not harm him.

GERSA.

No !— brief be his anguish !

LUDOLPH.

She 's gone — I am content — Nobles, good night !  
We are all weary, faint, set ope the doors —  
I will to bed ! — To-morrow —

190

[Dies.

THE CURTAIN FALLS.

---

(188) This utterance was intended for Ethelbert first : in the margin we read —

*Ethelbert. I fear the dagger...*

But this is crossed through, and Sigifred's speech is substituted — a speech which in previous editions reads *It could not harm him now.*





## KING STEPHEN :

A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT.

[This fragment appears to belong to the autumn of 1819; for Lord Houghton gives in the Aldine edition of 1876 the following note by Brown : — “ As soon as Keats had finished ‘ Otho the Great,’ I pointed out to him a subject for an English historical tragedy in the reign of Stephen, beginning with his defeat by the Empress Maud and ending with the death of his son Eustace. He was struck with the variety of events and characters which must necessarily be introduced, and I offered to give, as before, their dramatic conduct. ‘ The play must open,’ I began, ‘ with the field of battle, when Stephen’s forces are retreating’ —— ‘ Stop,’ he cried, ‘ I have been too long in leading-strings; I will do all this myself.’ He immediately set about it, and wrote two or three scenes — about 170 lines.” It will be seen that Brown’s estimate was considerably within the mark, as there are about 193 lines. The *dramatis personæ*, as far as the fragment reaches, may be tabulated thus : —

KING STEPHEN.

QUEEN MAUD.

THE EARL OF GLOCESTER.

THE EARL OF CHESTER.

EARL BALDWIN DE REDVERS.

DE KAIMS.

*Knights, Captains, Soldiers.*

There would of course have been many more characters had the work been finished. — H. B. F.]





# KING STEPHEN :

A DRAMATIC FRAGMENT.

ACT I.

SCENE I. — *Field of Battle.*

*Alarum. Enter King STEPHEN, Knights, and Soldiers.*

STEPHEN.

IF shame can on a soldier's vein-swoll'n front  
Spread deeper crimson than the battle's toil,  
Blush in your casing helmets! for see, see!  
Yonder my chivalry, my pride of war,  
Wrench'd with an iron hand from firm array, 5  
Are routed loose about the plashy meads,  
Of honour forfeit. O that my known voice  
Could reach your dastard ears, and fright you more!  
Fly, cowards, fly! Gloucester is at your backs!  
Throw your slack bridles o'er the flurried manes, 10  
Ply well the rowel with faint trembling heels,  
Scampering to death at last!

FIRST KNIGHT.

The enemy  
Bears his flaunt standard close upon their rear.

SECOND KNIGHT.

Sure of a bloody prey, seeing the fens  
Will swamp them girth-deep.

STEPHEN.

Over head and ears, 15  
No matter! 'Tis a gallant enemy;

How like a comet he goes streaming on.  
But we must plague him in the flank, — hey, friends?  
We are well breathed, — follow!

*Enter Earl BALDWIN and Soldiers, as defeated.*

STEPHEN.

De Redvers!

What is the monstrous bugbear that can fright  
Baldwin? 20

BALDWIN.

No scare-crow, but the fortunate star  
Of boisterous Chester, whose fell truncheon now  
Points level to the goal of victory.  
This way he comes, and if you would maintain  
Your person unaffronted by vile odds, 25  
Take horse, my Lord.

STEPHEN.

And which way spur for life?

Now I thank Heaven I am in the toils,  
That soldiers may bear witness how my arm  
Can burst the meshes. Not the eagle more  
Loves to beat up against a tyrannous blast, 30  
Than I to meet the torrent of my foes.  
This is a brag, — be't so, — but if I fall,  
Carve it upon my 'scutcheon'd sepulchre.  
On, fellow soldiers! Earl of Redvers, back!  
Not twenty Earls of Chester shall brow-beat  
The diadem. 35

[*Exeunt. Alarum.*]

SCENE II. — *Another part of the Field.*

*Trumpets sounding a Victory. Enter GLOCESTER, Knights, and Forces.*

GLOCESTER.

Now may we lift our bruised vizors up,  
And take the flattering freshness of the air,  
While the wide din of battle dies away  
Into times past, yet to be echoed sure  
In the silent pages of our chroniclers. 5



FIRST KNIGHT.

Will Stephen's death be mark'd there, my good Lord,  
Or that we gave him lodging in yon towers?

GLOCESTER.

Fain would I know the great usurper's fate.

*Enter two Captains severally.*

FIRST CAPTAIN.

My Lord!

SECOND CAPTAIN.

Most noble Earl!

FIRST CAPTAIN.

The King—

SECOND CAPTAIN.

The Empress greets—

GLOCESTER.

What of the King?

FIRST CAPTAIN.

He sole and lone maintains 10  
A hopeless bustle 'mid our swarming arms,  
And with a nimble savageness attacks,  
Escapes, makes fiercer onset, then anew  
Eludes death, giving death to most that dare  
Trespass within the circuit of his sword! 15  
He must by this have fallen. Baldwin is taken;  
And for the Duke of Bretagne, like a stag  
He flies, for the Welsh beagles to hunt down.  
God save the Empress!

GLOCESTER.

Now our dreaded Queen:  
What message from her Highness?

SECOND CAPTAIN.

Royal Maud 20  
From the throng'd towers of Lincoln hath look'd down,



Like Pallas from the walls of Ilion,  
 And seen her enemies havock'd at her feet.  
 She greets most noble Gloucester from her heart,  
 Intreating him, his captains, and brave knights, 25  
 To grace a banquet. The high city gates  
 Are envious which shall see your triumph pass ;  
 The streets are full of music.

*Enter Second Knight.*

GLOCESTER.

Whence come you?

SECOND KNIGHT.

From Stephen, my good Prince, — Stephen ! Stephen !

GLOCESTER.

Why do you make such echoing of his name? 30

SECOND KNIGHT.

Because I think, my lord, he is no man,  
 But a fierce demon, 'nointed safe from wounds,  
 And misbaptized with a Christian name.

GLOCESTER.

A mighty soldier ! — Does he still hold out?

SECOND KNIGHT.

He shames our victory. His valour still 35  
 Keeps elbow-room amid our eager swords,  
 And holds our bladed falchions all aloof —  
 His gleaming battle-axe being slaughter-sick,  
 Smote on the morion of a Flemish knight,  
 Broke short in his hand : upon the which he flung 40  
 The heft away with such a vengeful force,  
 It paunch'd the Earl of Chester's horse, who then  
 Spleen-hearted came in full career at him.

GLOCESTER.

Did no one take him at a vantage then?



SCENE III.]

*KING STEPHEN.*

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SECOND KNIGHT.

Three then with tiger leap upon him flew, 45  
Whom, with his sword swift-drawn and nimbly held,  
He stung away again, and stood to breathe,  
Smiling. Anon upon him rush'd once more  
A throng of foes, and in this renew'd strife,  
My sword met his and snapp'd off at the hilt. 50

GLOCESTER.

Come, lead me to this man — and let us move  
In silence, not insulting his sad doom  
With clamorous trumpets. To the Empress bear  
My salutation as befits the time.

*[Exeunt GLOCESTER and Forces.]*

SCENE III. — *The Field of Battle. Enter STEPHEN unarmed.*

STEPHEN.

Another sword! And what if I could seize  
One from Bellona's gleaming armoury,  
Or choose the fairest of her sheaved spears!  
Where are my enemies? Here, close at hand,  
Here come the testy brood. O for a sword! 5  
I'm faint — a biting sword! A noble sword!  
A hedge-stake — or a ponderous stone to hurl  
With brawny vengeance, like the labourer Cain.  
Come on! Farewell my kingdom, and all hail  
Thou superb, plum'd, and helmeted renown, 10  
All hail — I would not truck this brilliant day  
To rule in Pylos with a Nestor's beard —  
Come on!

*Enter DE KAIMS and Knights, &c.*

DE KAIMS.

Is't madness, or a hunger after death,  
That makes thee thus unarm'd throw taunts at us?  
Yield, Stephen, or my sword's point dips in 15  
The gloomy current of a traitor's heart.

STEPHEN.

Darest thou?

DE KAIMS.

How dare, against a man disarm'd?

STEPHEN.

What weapons has the lion but himself?  
Come not near me, De Kaims, for by the price  
Of all the glory I have won this day,  
Being a king, I will not yield alive  
To any but the second man of the realm,  
Robert of Gloucester.

DE KAIMS.

Thou shalt vail to me.

STEPHEN.

Shall I, when I have sworn against it, sir?  
Thou think'st it brave to take a breathing king,  
That, on a court-day bow'd to haughty Maud,  
The awed presence-chamber may be bold  
To whisper, there's the man who took alive  
Stephen — me — prisoner. Certes, De Kaims,  
The ambition is a noble one.

DE KAIMS.

'Tis true,

And, Stephen, I must compass it.



A SOLDIER.

Is an honest yeoman's spear  
Of no use at a need? Take that.

STEPHEN.

Ah, dastard!

DE KAIMS.

What, you are vulnerable! my prisoner!

STEPHEN.

No, not yet. I disclaim it, and demand 40  
Death as a sovereign right unto a king  
Who 'sdains to yield to any but his peer,  
If not in title, yet in noble deeds,  
The Earl of Gloucester. Stab to the hilt, De Kaims,  
For I will never by mean hands be led 45  
From this so famous field. Do you hear! Be quick!

[*Trumpets. Enter the Earl of CHESTER and Knights.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Presence Chamber. Queen MAUD in a Chair of State, the Earls of GLOUCESTER and CHESTER, Lords, Attendants.*

MAUD.

Gloucester, no more: I will behold that Boulogne:  
Set him before me. Not for the poor sake  
Of regal pomp and a vain-glorious hour,  
As thou with wary speech, yet near enough,  
Hast hinted.

GLOUCESTER.

Faithful counsel have I given; 5  
If wary, for your Highness' benefit.

MAUD.

The Heavens forbid that I should not think so,  
For by thy valour have I won this realm,  
Which by thy wisdom I will ever keep.

To sage advisers let me ever bend 10  
 A meek attentive ear, so that they treat  
 Of the wide kingdom's rule and government,  
 Not trenching on our actions personal.  
 Advis'd, not school'd, I would be; and henceforth  
 Spoken to in clear, plain, and open terms, 15  
 Not side-ways sermon'd at.

GLOCESTER.

Then, in plain terms,  
 Once more for the fallen king —

MAUD.

Your pardon, Brother,  
 I would no more of that; for, as I said,  
 'Tis not for worldly pomp I wish to give  
 The rebel, but as dooming judge to give 20  
 A sentence something worthy of his guilt.

GLOCESTER.

If 't must be so, I'll bring him to your presence.

[*Exit* GLOCESTER.]

MAUD.

A meaner summoner might do as well —  
 My Lord of Chester, is 't true what I hear  
 Of Stephen of Boulogne, our prisoner, 25  
 That he, as a fit penance for his crimes,  
 Eats wholesome, sweet, and palatable food  
 Off Gloucester's golden dishes — drinks pure wine,  
 Lodges soft?

CHESTER.

More than that, my gracious Queen,  
 Has anger'd me. The noble Earl, methinks, 30  
 Full soldier as he is, and without peer  
 In counsel, dreams too much among his books.  
 It may read well, but sure 'tis out of date  
 To play the Alexander with Darius.

MAUD.

Truth! I think so. By Heavens it shall not last! 35



CHESTER.

It would amaze your Highness now to mark  
How Gloucester overstrains his courtesy  
To that crime-loving rebel, that Boulogne —

MAUD.

That ingrate !

CHESTER.

For whose vast ingratitude  
To our late sovereign lord, your noble sire, 40  
The generous Earl condoles in his mishaps,  
And with a sort of lackeying friendliness,  
Talks off the mighty frowning from his brow,  
Woos him to hold a duet in a smile,  
Or, if it please him, play an hour at chess — 45

MAUD.

A perjured slave !

CHESTER.

And for his perjury,  
Gloucester has fit rewards — nay, I believe,  
He sets his bustling household's wits at work  
For flatteries to ease this Stephen's hours,  
And make a heaven of his purgatory ; 50  
Adorning bondage with the pleasant gloss  
Of feasts and music, and all idle shows  
Of indoor pageantry ; while syren whispers,  
Predestin'd for his ear, 'scape as half-check'd  
From lips the courtliest and the rubiest 55  
Of all the realm, admiring of his deeds.

MAUD.

A frost upon his summer !

CHESTER.

A queen's nod  
Can make his June December. Here he comes.

• • • • •



Vertical text or markings along the left edge of the page, possibly a page number or margin indicator.

## THE CAP AND BELLS ;

OR, THE JEALOUSIES :

A FAERY TALE — UNFINISHED.

[Lord Houghton first gave this composition in the *Life, Letters &c.* (1848), and in Volume II, page 51, refers to it as "the last of Keats's literary labours." The poet says in a letter to Brown, written after the first attack of blood-spitting, "I shall soon begin upon 'Lucy Vaughan Lloyd.' I do not begin composition yet, being willing, in case of a relapse, to have nothing to reproach myself with." I presume, therefore, that the composition may be assigned to the Spring or Summer of 1820. In August of that year, Leigh Hunt seems to have had the manuscript in his hands, for, in the first part of his article on Coaches, which fills *The Indicator* for the 23rd of August 1820, he quotes four stanzas and four lines from the poem, as by "a very good poetess, of the name of Lucy V—— L——, who has favoured us with a sight of a manuscript poem," &c. The stanzas quoted are xxv to xxix. Lord Houghton gives, in the Aldine edition of 1876, the following note by Brown: — "This Poem was written subject to future amendments and omissions: it was begun without a plan, and without any prescribed laws for the supernatural machinery." His Lordship adds an interesting passage from a letter written to him by Lord Jeffrey: — "There are beautiful passages and lines of ineffable sweetness in these minor pieces, and strange outbursts of individual fancy and felicitous expressions in the 'Cap and Bells,' though the general extravagance of the poetry is more suited to an Italian than to an English taste." The late Gabriel Rossetti wrote to me of this poem as "the only unworthy stuff Keats ever wrote except an early trifle or two," and again as "the to me hateful *Cap and Bells*." I confess that it seems to me entirely unworthy of Keats, though certainly a proof, if proof were needed, of his versatility. It has the character of a mere intellectual and mechanical exercise, performed at a time when those higher forces constituting the mainspring of poetry were exhausted; but even so I find it difficult to figure Keats as doing anything so aimless as this appears when regarded solely as an effort







## THE CAP AND BELLS;

OR, THE JEALOUSIES:

A FAERY TALE — UNFINISHED.

### I.

IN midmost Ind, beside Hydaspes cool,  
There stood, or hover'd, tremulous in the air,  
A faery city 'neath the potent rule  
Of Emperor Elfinan; fam'd ev'rywhere  
For love of mortal women, maidens fair,  
Whose lips were solid, whose soft hands were made  
Of a fit mould and beauty, ripe and rare,  
To tamper his slight wooing, warm yet staid:  
He lov'd girls smooth as shades, but hated a mere shade.

### II.

This was a crime forbidden by the law;  
And all the priesthood of his city wept,  
For ruin and dismay they well foresaw,  
If impious prince no bound or limit kept,  
And faery Zendervester overstept;  
They wept, he sin'd, and still he would sin on,  
They dreamt of sin, and he sin'd while they slept;  
In vain the pulpit thunder'd at the throne,  
Caricature was vain, and vain the tart lampoon.

### III.

Which seeing, his high court of parliament  
Laid a remonstrance at his Highness' feet,  
Praying his royal senses to content  
Themselves with what in faery land was sweet,  
Befitting best that shade with shade should meet:

Whereat, to calm their fears, he promis'd soon  
 From mortal tempters all to make retreat, —  
 Aye, even on the first of the new moon,  
 An immaterial wife to espouse as heaven's boon.

## IV.

Meantime he sent a fluttering embassy  
 To Pigmio, of Imaus sovereign,  
 To half beg, and half demand, respectfully,  
 The hand of his fair daughter Bellanaine;  
 An audience had, and speeching done, they gain  
 Their point, and bring the weeping bride away;  
 Whom, with but one attendant, safely lain  
 Upon their wings, they bore in bright array,  
 While little harps were touch'd by many a lyric fay.

## V.

As in old pictures tender cherubim  
 A child's soul thro' the sapphir'd canvas bear,  
 So, thro' a real heaven, on they swim  
 With the sweet princess on her plumag'd lair,  
 Speed giving to the winds her lustrous hair;  
 And so she journey'd, sleeping or awake,  
 Save when, for healthful exercise and air,  
 She chose to "*promener à l'aile*," or take  
 A pigeon's somerset, for sport or change's sake.

## VI.

"Dear Princess, do not whisper me so loud,"  
 Quoth Corallina, nurse and confidant,  
 "Do not you see there, lurking in a cloud,  
 Close at your back, that sly old Crafticant?  
 He hears a whisper plainer than a rant:  
 Dry up your tears, and do not look so blue;  
 He's Elfinan's great state-spy militant,  
 His running, lying, flying foot-man too, —  
 Dear mistress, let him have no handle against you!"

---

(IV) It seems doubtful whether the word *and* in line 3 has not been left there  
 mistake.

VII.

“ Show him a mouse's tail, and he will guess,  
With metaphysic swiftness, at the mouse ;  
Show him a garden, and with speed no less,  
He'll surmise sagely of a dwelling house,  
And plot, in the same minute, how to chouse  
The owner out of it ; show him a ” — “ Peace !  
Peace ! nor contrive thy mistress' ire to rouse ! ”  
Return'd the Princess, “ my tongue shall not cease  
Till from this hated match I get a free release.

VIII.

“ Ah, beauteous mortal ! ” “ Hush ! ” quoth Coralline,  
“ Really you must not talk of him, indeed.”  
“ You hush ! ” reply'd the mistress, with a shine  
Of anger in her eyes, enough to breed  
In stouter hearts than nurse's fear and dread :  
’Twas not the glance itself made nurse's flinch,  
But of its threat she took the utmost heed ;  
Not liking in her heart an hour-long pinch,  
Or a sharp needle run into her back an inch.

IX.

So she was silenc'd, and fair Bellanaine,  
Writhing her little body with ennui,  
Continued to lament and to complain,  
That Fate, cross-purposing, should let her be  
Ravish'd away far from her dear countree ;  
That all her feelings should be set at nought,  
In trumping up this match so hastily,  
With lowland blood ; and lowland blood she thought  
Poison, as every staunch true-born Imaian ought.

X.

Sorely she griev'd, and wetted three or four  
White Provence rose-leaves with her faery tears,  
But not for this cause ; — alas ! she had more  
Bad reasons for her sorrow, as appears  
In the fam'd memoirs of a thousand years,

Written by Crafticant, and published  
 By Parpaglion and Co., (those sly compeers  
 Who rak'd up ev'ry fact against the dead,)  
 In Scarab Street, Panthea, at the Jubal's Head.

## XI.

Where, after a long hypercritic howl  
 Against the vicious manners of the age,  
 He goes on to expose, with heart and soul,  
 What vice in this or that year was the rage,  
 Backbiting all the world in every page;  
 With special strictures on the horrid crime,  
 (Section'd and subsection'd with learning sage.)  
 Of faeries stooping on their wings sublime  
 To kiss a mortal's lips, when such were in their prime.

## XII.

Turn to the copious index, you will find  
 Somewhere in the column, headed letter B,  
 The name of Bellanaine, if you're not blind;  
 Then pray refer to the text, and you will see  
 An article made up of calumny  
 Against this highland princess, rating her  
 For giving way, so over fashionably,  
 To this new-fangled vice, which seems a burr  
 Stuck in his moral throat, no coughing e'er could stir.

## XIII.

There he says plainly that she lov'd a man!  
 That she around him flutter'd, flirted, toy'd,  
 Before her marriage with great Elfinan;  
 That after marriage too, she never joy'd  
 In husband's company, but still employ'd  
 Her wits to 'scape away to Angle-land;  
 Where liv'd the youth, who worried and annoy'd  
 Her tender heart, and its warm ardours fann'd  
 To such a dreadful blaze, her side would scorch her hand.

## XIV.

But let us leave this idle tittle-tattle  
 To waiting-maids, and bed-room coteries,



*THE CAP AND BELLS.*

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Nor till fit time against her fame wage battle.  
Poor Elfinan is very ill at ease,  
Let us resume his subject if you please :  
For it may comfort and console him much,  
To rhyme and syllable his miseries ;  
Poor Elfinan ! whose cruel fate was such,  
He sat and curs'd a bride he knew he could not touch.

XV.

Soon as (according to his promises)  
The bridal embassy had taken wing,  
And vanish'd, bird-like, o'er the suburb trees,  
The Emperor, empierc'd with the sharp sting  
Of love, retired, vex'd and murmuring  
Like any drone shut from the fair bee-queen,  
Into his cabinet, and there did fling  
His limbs upon a sofa, full of spleen,  
And damn'd his House of Commons, in complete chagrin.

XVI.

" I'll trounce some of the members," cry'd the Prince,  
" I'll put a mark against some rebel names,  
I'll make the Opposition-benches wince,  
I'll show them very soon, to all their shames,  
What 'tis to smother up a Prince's flames ;  
That ministers should join in it, I own,  
Surprises me ! — they too at these high games !  
Am I an Emperor ? Do I wear a crown ?  
Imperial Elfinan, go hang thyself or drown !

XVII.

" I'll trounce 'em ! — there's the square-cut chancellor,  
His son shall never touch that bishopric ;  
And for the nephew of old Palfior,  
I'll show him that his speeches made me sick,  
And give the colonelcy to Phalaric ;

---

(xvii) On the supposition of a glance at the royal matrimonial squabble, at its height when Keats wrote this piece, "the square-cut chancellor" would be Mr. Vansittart, I presume ; and "the tiptoe marquis" might probably be the Marquis of Lansdowne, whose refusal to sit upon the Green Bag Committee in the House of Lords was both "moral" and "gallant."

The tiptoe marquis, moral and gallant,  
 Shall lodge in shabby taverns upon tick;  
 And for the Speaker's second cousin's aunt,  
 She sha'n't be maid of honour, — by heaven that she sha'n't!

## XVIII.

“I'll shirk the Duke of A. ; I'll cut his brother ;  
 I'll give no garter to his eldest son ;  
 I won't speak to his sister or his mother !  
 The Viscount B. shall live at cut-and-run ;  
 But how in the world can I contrive to stun  
 That fellow's voice, which plagues me worse than any,  
 That stubborn fool, that impudent state-dun,  
 Who sets down ev'ry sovereign as a zany, —  
 That vulgar commoner, Esquire *Biancpany*?

## XIX.

“Monstrous affair! Pshaw! pah! what ugly minx  
 Will they fetch from Imaus for my bride?  
 Alas! my wearied heart within me sinks,  
 To think that I must be so near ally'd  
 To a cold dullard fay, — ah, woe betide!  
 Ah, fairest of all human loveliness!  
 Sweet Bertha! what crime can it be to glide  
 About the fragrant plaitings of thy dress,  
 Or kiss thine eyes, or count thy locks, tress after tress?”

## XX.

So said, one minute's while his eyes remain'd  
 Half lidded, piteous, languid, innocent ;  
 But, in a wink, their splendour they regain'd,  
 Sparkling revenge with amorous fury blent.  
 Love thwarted in bad temper oft has vent :

---

(XVIII) The name *Biancpany* as a mere fantasy is too inconceivably wild; and at this point I think the subject mentioned in previous notes may be clearly demonstrated. *Bianco* = *white*, *pane* = *bread*; and we have the name of one whose career is notoriously, from George IV's point of view, that of lines 6 to 9. Mr. Samuel Whitbread had at that time been a radical member of the first water for a long period: he was so well known as an adherent of Queen Caroline, that he is said to have furnished her Majesty, from his great wealth, with the necessary funds for carrying on her case; and on the 18th of September 1820 he brought his offences to a head by attacking the King in a speech supporting a motion for quashing “these filthy proceedings.”



*THE CAP AND BELLS.*

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He rose, he stamp't his foot, he rang the bell,  
And order'd some death-warrants to be sent  
For signature : — somewhere the tempest fell,  
As many a poor fellow does not live to tell.

XXI.

“ At the same time, Eban,” — (this was his page,  
A fay of colour, slave from top to toe,  
Sent as a present, while yet under age,  
From the Viceroy of Zanguebar, — wise, slow,  
His speech, his only words were “ yes ” and “ no,”  
But swift of look, and foot, and wing was he, —)  
“ At the same time, Eban, this instant go  
To Hum the soothsayer, whose name I see  
Among the fresh arrivals in our empery.

XXII.

“ Bring Hum to me ! But stay — here, take my ring,  
The pledge of favour, that he not suspect  
Any foul play, or awkward murdering,  
Tho' I have bowstrung many of his sect ;  
Throw in a hint, that if he should neglect  
One hour, the next shall see him in my grasp,  
And the next after that shall see him neck'd,  
Or swallow'd by my hunger-starved asp, —  
And mention ('tis as well) the torture of the wasp.”

XXIII.

These orders given, the Prince, in half a pet,  
Let o'er the silk his propping elbow slide,  
Caught up his little legs, and, in a fret,  
Fell on the sofa on his royal side.  
The slave retreated backwards, humble-ey'd,  
And with a slave-like silence clos'd the door,  
And to old Hum thro' street and alley hied ;  
He “ knew the city,” as we say, of yore,  
And for short cuts and turns, was nobody knew more.

XXIV.

It was the time when wholesale dealers close  
Their shutters with a moody sense of wealth,



But retail dealers, diligent, let loose  
 The gas (objected to on score of health),  
 Convey'd in little solder'd pipes by stealth,  
 And make it flare in many a brilliant form,  
 That all the powers of darkness it repell'th,  
 Which to the oil-trade doth great scaith and harm,  
 And superseded quite the use of the glow-worm.

## XXV.

Eban, untempted by the pastry-cooks,  
 (Of pastry he got store within the palace,)  
 With hasty steps, wrapp'd cloak, and solemn looks,  
 Incognito upon his errand sallies,  
 His smelling-bottle ready for the allies;  
 He pass'd the Hurdy-gurdies with disdain,  
 Vowing he'd have them sent on board the gallies;  
 Just as he made his vow, it 'gan to rain,  
 Therefore he call'd a coach, and bade it drive amain.

## XXVI.

"I'll pull the string," said he, and further said,  
 "Polluted Jarvey! Ah, thou filthy hack!

---

(xxv) The passage commencing here, quoted by Hunt in *The Indicator*, was perhaps the best quotation he could have made from the poem, even if it had not suited the particular purpose he had in view. The text of his quotation shows no variation from the current issues of later date, except in the matter of a few extra capitals to common nouns. The passage introducing the stanzas, mentioned at page 553, is as follows:

"Of the Hackney-coach we cannot make as short work, as many persons like to make of it in reality. Perhaps indeed it is partly a sense of the contempt it undergoes, which induces us to endeavour to make the best of it. But it has its merits, as we shall shew presently. In the account of its demerits, we have been anticipated by a new, and we are sorry to say a very good poetess, of the name of Lucy V—L—, who has favoured us with a sight of a manuscript poem, in which they are related with great nicety and sensitiveness.

"READER. What, Sir, sorry to say that a lady is a good poetess?"

"INDICATOR. Only in as much, Madam, as the lady gives such authority to the antisocial view of this subject, and will not agree with us as to the beatitude of the Hackney-coach. — But hold: — upon turning to the Manuscript again, we find that the objections are put into the mouth of a Dandy Courtier. This makes a great difference. The Hackney resumes all which it had lost in the good graces of the fair authoress. The only wonder is, how the Courtier could talk so well."

It will be seen that Hunt kept his friend's secret dexterously enough.

(xxvi) The slang word *Jarvey*, for the driver of a hackney-coach, is well nigh forgotten in these days of "Hansoms" and "growlers." I do not know whether it was a common liberty to take with the word to transfer it from the driver to the vehicle itself; but probably Keats knew the orthodox application well enough.



*THE CAP AND BELLS.*

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Whose springs of life are all dry'd up and dead,  
Whose linsey-woolsey lining hangs all slack,  
Whose rug is straw, whose wholeness is a crack ;  
And evermore thy steps go clatter-clitter ;  
Whose glass once up can never be got back,  
Who prov'st, with jolting arguments and bitter,  
That 'tis of modern use to travel in a litter.

XXVII.

“Thou inconvenience ! thou hungry crop  
For all corn ! thou snail-creeper to and fro,  
Who while thou goest ever seem'st to stop,  
And fiddle-faddle standest while you go ;  
I' the morning, freighted with a weight of woe,  
Unto some lazar-house thou journeyest,  
And in the evening tak'st a double row  
Of dowdies, for some dance or party drest,  
Besides the goods meanwhile thou movest east and west.

XXVIII.

“ By thy ungalant bearing and sad mien,  
An inch appears the utmost thou couldst budge ;  
Yet at the slightest nod, or hint, or sign,  
Round to the curb-stone patient dost thou trudge,  
School'd in a beckon, learned in a nudge,  
A dull-ey'd Argus watching for a fare ;  
Quiet and plodding, thou dost bear no grudge  
To whisking Tilburies, or Phaetons rare,  
Curricles, or Mail-coaches, swift beyond compare.”

XXIX.

Philosophizing thus, he pull'd the check,  
And bade the Coachman wheel to such a street,  
Who, turning much his body, more his neck,  
Louted full low, and hoarsely did him greet :  
“ Certes, Monsieur were best take to his feet,  
Seeing his servant can no further drive  
For press of coaches, that to-night here meet,  
Many as bees about a straw-capp'd hive,  
When first for April honey into faint flowers they dive.”

## XXX.

Eban then paid his fare, and tiptoe went  
 To Hum's hotel; and, as he on did pass  
 With head inclin'd, each dusky lineament  
 Show'd in the pearl-pav'd street, as in a glass;  
 His purple vest, that ever peeping was  
 Rich from the fluttering crimson of his cloak,  
 His silvery trowsers, and his silken sash  
 Tied in a burnish'd knot, their semblance took  
 Upon the mirror'd walls, wherever he might look.

## XXXI.

He smil'd at self, and, smiling, show'd his teeth,  
 And seeing his white teeth, he smil'd the more;  
 Lifted his eye-brows, spurn'd the path beneath,  
 Show'd teeth again, and smil'd as heretofore,  
 Until he knock'd at the magician's door;  
 Where, till the porter answer'd, might be seen,  
 In the clear panel more he could adore, —  
 His turban wreath'd of gold, and white, and green,  
 Mustachios, ear-ring, nose-ring, and his sabre keen.

## XXXII.

“Does not your master give a rout to-night?”  
 Quoth the dark page. “Oh, no!” return'd the Swiss,  
 “Next door but one to us, upon the right,  
 The *Magazin des Modes* now open is  
 Against the Emperor's wedding; — and, sir, this  
 My master finds a monstrous horrid bore;  
 As he retir'd, an hour ago I wis,  
 With his best beard and brimstone, to explore  
 And cast a quiet figure in his second floor.

## XXXIII.

“Gad! he's oblig'd to stick to business!  
 For chalk, I hear, stands at a pretty price;  
 And as for aqua vitæ — there's a mess!

---

(xxx) Ending his quotation with line 4 of this stanza, Hunt says — “tact here is so nice, of all the infirmities which are likely to beset our poor friend, that we should only spoil it to say more.”



The *dentes sapientia* of mice,  
Our barber tells me too, are on the rise, —  
Tinder's a lighter article, — nitre pure  
Goes off like lightning, — grains of Paradise  
At an enormous figure! — stars not sure! —  
Zodiac will not move without a slight *douceur*!

## XXXIV.

“Venus won't stir a peg without a fee,  
And master is too partial, *entre nous*,  
To” — “Hush — hush!” cried Eban, “sure that is he  
Coming down stairs, — by St. Bartholomew!  
As backwards as he can, — is't something new?  
Or is't his custom, in the name of fun?”  
“He always comes down backward, with one shoe” —  
Return'd the porter — “off, and one shoe on.  
Like, saving shoe for sock or stocking, my man John!”

## XXXV.

It was indeed the great Magician,  
Feeling, with careful toe, for every stair,  
And retrograding careful as he can,  
Backwards and downwards from his own two pair:  
“Salpietro!” exclaim'd Hum, “is the dog there?  
He's always in my way upon the mat!”  
“He's in the kitchen, or the Lord knows where,” —  
Reply'd the Swiss, — “the nasty, yelping brat!”  
“Don't beat him!” return'd Hum, and on the floor came pat.

## XXXVI.

Then facing right about, he saw the Page,  
And said: “Don't tell me what you want, Eban;  
The Emperor is now in a huge rage, —  
'Tis nine to one he'll give you the rattan!  
Let us away!” Away together ran  
The plain-dress'd sage and spangled blackamoor,

---

(XXXV) Whatever Keats may have written in the eighth line of this stanza, I think there can be no doubt that he meant to write *yelping brat*, not, as in previous editions, *whelping brat*, which is a contradiction in terms. Although *whelp* and *brat* are almost synonymous, and whelps were probably so called because of their yelping, I can find no instance of the verb to whelp used in any sense but to bring forth whelps. This is obviously beyond the possibilities of a brat, and more especially of a male brat: see lines 6 and 7.

Nor rested till they stood to cool, and fan,  
 And breathe themselves at th' Emperor's chamber door,  
 When Eban thought he heard a soft imperial snore.

## XXXVII.

"I thought you guess'd, foretold, or prophesy'd,  
 That's Majesty was in a raving fit?"  
 "He dreams," said Hum, "or I have ever lied,  
 That he is tearing you, sir, bit by bit."  
 "He's not asleep, and you have little wit,"  
 Reply'd the page; "that little buzzing noise,  
 Whate'er your palmistry may make of it,  
 Comes from a play-thing of the Emperor's choice,  
 From a Man-Tiger-Organ, prettiest of his toys."

## XXXVIII.

Eban then usher'd in the learned Seer:  
 Elfinan's back was turn'd, but, ne'ertheless,  
 Both, prostrate on the carpet, ear by ear,  
 Crept silently, and waited in distress,  
 Knowing the Emperor's moody bitterness;  
 Eban especially, who on the floor 'gan  
 Tremble and quake to death,—he feared less  
 A dose of senna-tea or nightmare Gorgon  
 Than the Emperor when he play'd on his Man-Tiger-Organ.

## XXXIX.

They kiss'd nine times the carpet's velvet face  
 Of glossy silk, soft, smooth, and meadow-green,  
 Where the close eye in deep rich fur might trace  
 A silver tissue, scantily to be seen,  
 As daisies lurk'd in June-grass, buds in green;  
 Sudden the music ceased, sudden the hand  
 Of majesty, by dint of passion keen,  
 Doubled into a common fist, went grand,  
 And knock'd down three cut glasses, and his best ink-stand.

## XL.

Then turning round, he saw those trembling two:  
 "Eban," said he, "as slaves should taste the fruits

---

(XL) The word *the* before *next day* in line 4 might be introduced with tolerable confidence; but the poet might have preferred to set the metre right by introducing *best* before *suits*.



Of diligence, I shall remember you  
To-morrow, or next day, as time suits,  
In a finger conversation with my mutes, —  
Begone! — for you, Chaldean! here remain!  
Fear not, quake not, and as good wine recruits  
A conjurer's spirits, what cup will you drain?  
Sherry in silver, hock in gold, or glass'd champagne?"

## XLI.

"Commander of the faithful!" answer'd Hum,  
"In preference to these, I'll merely taste  
A thimble-full of old Jamaica rum."  
"A simple boon!" said Elfinan; "thou may'st  
Have Nantz, with which my morning-coffee's lac'd."  
"I'll have a glass of Nantz, then," — said the Seer, —  
"Made racy — (sure my boldness is misplac'd!) —  
With the third part — (yet that is drinking dear!) —  
Of the least drop of *crème de citron*, crystal clear."

## XLII.

"I pledge you, Hum! and pledge my dearest love,  
My Bertha!" "Bertha! Bertha!" cry'd the sage,  
"I know a many Berthas!" "Mine's above  
All Berthas!" sighed the Emperor. "I engage,"  
Said Hum, "in duty, and in vassalage,  
To mention all the Berthas in the earth; —  
There's Bertha Watson, — and Miss Bertha Page, —  
This fam'd for languid eyes, and that for mirth, —  
There's Bertha Blount of York, — and Bertha Knox of Perth."

## XLIII.

"You seem to know" — "I do know," answer'd Hum,  
"Your Majesty's in love with some fine girl  
Named Bertha; but her surname will not come,

---

(XLI) As a note to the word *laced* in line 5, previous editions have the following sentence from *The Spectator*: — "Mr. Nisby is of opinion that laced coffee is bad for the head." Whether the note is from Keats's manuscript or supplied by the editor does not appear.

(XLIII) One of the few points of vivid interest in this poem is the strange connexion, by name and place, Bertha and Canterbury, with the wonderful fragment, so full of earnest meaning and high poetic intention, *The Eve of St. Mark*. See also stanza LVI.

Without a little conjuring." "'Tis Pearl,  
 'Tis Bertha Pearl! What makes my brain so whirl?  
 And she is softer, fairer than her name!"  
 "Where does she live?" ask'd Hum. "Her fair locks curl  
 So brightly, they put all our fays to shame! —  
 Live? — O! at Canterbury, with her old grand-dame."

## XLIV.

"Good! good!" cried Hum, "I've known her from a child!  
 She is a changeling of my management;  
 She was born at midnight in an Indian wild;  
 Her mother's screams with the striped tiger's blent,  
 While the torch-bearing slaves a halloo sent  
 Into the jungles; and her palanquin,  
 Rested amid the desert's dreariment,  
 Shook with her agony, till fair were seen  
 The little Bertha's eyes ope on the stars scene."

## XLV.

"I can't say," said the monarch; "that may be  
 Just as it happen'd, true or else a bam!  
 Drink up your brandy, and sit down by me,  
 Feel, feel my pulse, how much in love I am;  
 And if your science is not all a sham,  
 Tell me some means to get the lady here."  
 "Upon my honour!" said the son of Cham,  
 "She is my dainty changeling, near and dear,  
 Although her story sounds at first a little queer."

## XLVI.

"Convey her to me, Hum, or by my crown,  
 My sceptre, and my cross-surmounted globe,

---

(XLV) In Lord Houghton's editions appears the following footnote to the word *Cham* in line 7: — "Cham is said to have been the inventor of magic. Linn learnt this from Bayle's Dictionary, and had copied a long Latin note from that work." If this is a note of Keats's, it would seem to imply that a part of his scheme was to have the work attributed to Lucy Vaughan Lloyd, and ostensibly edited and annotated by some one else, — following the plan adopted in that same year: viz by his friend Reynolds in regard to that clever book "The Fancy: A Selection from the Poetical Remains of the late Peter Corcoran, of Gray's Inn, Student at Law. With a brief memoir of his Life" (Taylor and Hessey).



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I'll knock you" — "Does your majesty mean — *down* ?  
No, no, you never could my feelings probe  
To such a depth!" The Emperor took his robe,  
And wept upon its purple palatine,  
While Hum continued, shamming half a sob, —  
"In Canterbury doth your lady shine?  
But let me cool your brandy with a little wine."

XLVII.

Whereat a narrow Flemish glass he took,  
That since belong'd to Admiral De Witt,  
Admir'd it with a connoisseuring look,  
And with the ripest claret crowned it,  
And, ere the lively bead could burst and flit,  
He turn'd it quickly, nimbly upside down,  
His mouth being held conveniently fit  
To catch the treasure: "Best in all the town!"  
He said, smack'd his moist lips, and gave a pleasant frown.

XLVIII.

"Ah! good my Prince, weep not!" And then again  
He filled a bumper. "Great Sire, do not weep!  
Your pulse is shocking, but I'll ease your pain."  
"Fetch me that Ottoman, and prithee keep  
Your voice low," said the Emperor; "and steep  
Some lady's-fingers nice in Candy wine;  
And prithee, Hum, behind the screen do peep  
For the rose-water vase, magician mine!  
And sponge my forehead,— so my love doth make me pine.

XLIX.

"Ah, cursed Bellanaine!" "Don't think of her,"  
Rejoin'd the Mago, "but on Bertha muse;  
For, by my choicest best barometer,  
You shall not throttled be in marriage noose;  
I've said it, Sire; you only have to choose  
Bertha or Bellanaine." So saying, he drew  
From the left pocket of his threadbare hose,  
A sampler hoarded slyly, good as new,  
Holding it by his thumb and finger full in view



## L.

“Sire, this is Bertha Pearl's neat handy-work,  
 Her name, see here, *Midsummer, ninety-one.*”  
 Elfinan snatch'd it with a sudden jerk,  
 And wept as if he never would have done,  
 Honouring with royal tears the poor homespun;  
 Whereon were broider'd tigers with black eyes,  
 And long-tail'd pheasants, and a rising sun,  
 Plenty of posies, great stags, butterflies  
 Bigger than stags,—a moon,—with other mysteries.

## LI.

The monarch handled o'er and o'er again  
 Those day-school hieroglyphics with a sigh;  
 Somewhat in sadness, but pleas'd in the main,  
 Till this oracular couplet met his eye  
 Astounded — *Cupid, I do thee defy!*  
 It was too much. He shrunk back in his chair,  
 Grew pale as death, and fainted — very nigh!  
 “Pho! nonsense!” exclaim'd Hum, “now don't despair;  
 She does not mean it really. Cheer up, hearty — there!

## LII.

“And listen to my words. You say you won't,  
 On any terms, marry Miss Bellanaine;  
 It goes against your conscience — good! Well, don't.  
 You say you love a mortal. I would fain  
 Persuade your honour's highness to refrain  
 From peccadilloes. But, Sire, as I say,  
 What good would that do? And, to be more plain,  
 You would do me a mischief some odd day,  
 Cut off my ears and hands, or head too, by my fay!

## LIII.

“Besides, manners forbid that I should pass any  
 Vile strictures on the conduct of a prince  
 Who should indulge his genius, if he has any,  
 Not, like a subject, foolish matters mince.  
 Now I think on't, perhaps I could convince  
 Your Majesty there is no crime at all



THE CAP AND BELLS.

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In loving pretty little Bertha, since  
She's very delicate, — not over tall, —  
A fairy's hand, and in the waist why — very small."

LIV.

"Ring the repeater, gentle Hum!" " 'Tis five,"  
Said gentle Hum; "the nights draw in apace;  
The little birds I hear are all alive;  
I see the dawning touch'd upon your face;  
Shall I put out the candles, please your Grace?"  
"Do put them out, and, without more ado,  
Tell me how I may that sweet girl embrace, —  
How you can bring her to me." "That's for you,  
Great Emperor! to adventure, like a lover true."

LV.

"I fetch her!" — "Yes, an't like your Majesty;  
And as she would be frighten'd wide awake  
To travel such a distance through the sky,  
Use of some soft manœuvre you must make,  
For your convenience, and her dear nerves' sake;  
Nice way would be to bring her in a swoon,  
Anon, I'll tell what course were best to take;  
You must away this morning." "Hum! so soon?"  
"Sire, you must be in Kent by twelve o'clock at noon."

LVI.

At this great Cæsar started on his feet,  
Lifted his wings, and stood attentive-wise.  
"Those wings to Canterbury you must beat,  
If you hold Bertha as a worthy prize.  
Look in the Almanack — *Moore* never lies —  
April the twenty-fourth, — this coming day,  
Now breathing its new bloom upon the skies,  
Will end in St. Mark's Eve; — you must away,  
For on that eve alone can you the maid convey."

LVII.

Then the magician solemnly 'gan to frown,  
So that his frost-white eyebrows, beetling low,  
Shaded his deep green eyes, and wrinkles brown

Plaited upon his furnace-scorched brow :  
 Forth from his hood that hung his neck below,  
 He lifted a bright casket of pure gold,  
 Touch'd a spring-lock, and there in wool or snow,  
 Charm'd into ever freezing, lay an old  
 And legend-leaved book, mysterious to behold.

## LVIII.

“ Take this same book, — it will not bite you, Sire ;  
 There, put it underneath your royal arm ;  
 Though it's a pretty weight it will not tire,  
 But rather on your journey keep you warm :  
 This is the magic, this the potent charm,  
 That shall drive Bertha to a fainting fit !  
 When the time comes, don't feel the least alarm,  
 But lift her from the ground, and swiftly flit  
 Back to your palace.        \*        \*        \*

## LIX.

“ What shall I do with that same book ? ” “ Why merely  
 Lay it on Bertha's table, close beside  
 Her work-box, and 'twill help your purpose dearly ;  
 I say no more. ” “ Or good or ill betide,  
 Through the wide air to Kent this morn I glide ! ”  
 Exclaim'd the Emperor. “ When I return,  
 Ask what you will, — I'll give you my new bride !  
 And take some more wine, Hum ; — O Heavens ! I burn  
 To be upon the wing ! Now, now, that minx I spurn ! ”

## LX.

“ Leave her to me, ” rejoin'd the magian :  
 “ But how shall I account, illustrious fay !  
 For thine imperial absence ? Pho ! I can  
 Say you are very sick, and bar the way  
 To your so loving courtiers' for one day ;  
 If either of their two archbishops' graces  
 Should talk of extreme unction, I shall say  
 You do not like cold pig with Latin phrases,  
 Which never should be used but in alarming cases. ”

## LXI.

"Open the window, Hum; I'm ready now!"  
 Zooks!" exclaim'd Hum, as up the sash he drew,  
 "Behold, your Majesty, upon the brow  
 Of yonder hill, what crowds of people!" "Whew!  
 The monster's always after something new,"  
 Return'd his Highness, "they are piping hot  
 To see my pigsney Bellanaine. Hum! do  
 Tighten my belt a little, — so, so, — not  
 Too tight, — the book! — my wand! — so, nothing is forgot."

## LXII.

"Wounds! how they shout!" said Hum, "and there, — see, see!  
 Th' ambassador's return'd from Pigmio!  
 The morning's very fine, — uncommonly!  
 See, past the skirts of yon white cloud they go,  
 Tinging it with soft crimsons! Now below  
 The sable-pointed heads of firs and pines  
 They dip, move on, and with them moves a glow  
 Along the forest side! Now amber lines  
 Reach the hill top, and now throughout the valley shines."

## LXIII.

"Why, Hum, you're getting quite poetical!  
 Those *nows* you managed in a special style."  
 "If ever you have leisure, Sire, you shall  
 See scraps of mine will make it worth your while,  
 Tit-bits for Phæbus! — yes, you well may smile.  
 Hark! hark! the bells!" "A little further yet,  
 Good Hum, and let me view this mighty coil."  
 Then the great Emperor full graceful set  
 His elbow for a prop, and snuff'd his mignonnette.

## LXIV.

The morn is full of holiday; loud bells  
 With rival clamours ring from every spire;  
 Cunningly-station'd music dies and swells  
 In echoing places; when the winds respire,

---

(LXI) Previous editions read *Where?* for *Whew!* in line 4.

Light flags stream out like gauzy tongues of fire ;  
 A metropolitan murmur, lifeful, warm,  
 Comes from the northern suburbs ; rich attire  
 Freckles with red and gold the moving swarm ;  
 While here and there clear trumpets blow a keen alarm.

## LXV.

And now the fairy escort was seen clear,  
 Like the old pageant of Aurora's train,  
 Above a pearl-built minster, hovering near ;  
 First wily Crafticant, the chamberlain,  
 Balanc'd upon his grey-grown pinions twain,  
 His slender wand officially reveal'd ;  
 Then black gnomes scattering sixpences like rain ;  
 Then pages three and three ; and next, slave-held,  
 The Imaian 'scutcheon bright, — one mouse in argent field.

## LXVI.

Gentlemen pensioners next ; and after them,  
 A troop of winged Janizaries flew ;  
 Then slaves, as presents bearing many a gem ;  
 Then twelve physicians fluttering two and two ;  
 And next a chaplain in a cassock new ;  
 Then Lords in waiting ; then (what head not reels  
 For pleasure?) — the fair Princess in full view,  
 Borne upon wings, — and very pleas'd she feels  
 To have such splendour dance attendance at her heels.

## LXVII.

For there was more magnificence behind :  
 She wav'd her handkerchief. “ Ah, very grand ! ”  
 Cry'd Elfinan, and clos'd the window-blind ;  
 “ And, Hum, we must not shilly-shally stand, —  
 Adieu ! adieu ! I'm off for Angle-land !  
 I say, old Hocus, have you such a thing  
 About you, — feel your pockets, I command, —  
 I want, this instant, an invisible ring, —  
 Thank you, old mummy ! — now securely I take wing.”

## LXVIII.

Then Elfinan swift vaulted from the floor,  
 And lighted graceful on the window-sill ;

Under one arm the magic book he bore,  
 The other he could wave about at will;  
 Pale was his face, he still look'd very ill:  
 He bow'd at Bellanaine, and said — " Poor Bell !  
 Farewell ! farewell ! and if for ever ! still  
 For ever fare thee well ! " — and then he fell  
 A laughing ! — snapp'd his fingers ! — shame it is to tell !

## LXIX.

" By'r Lady ! he is gone ! " cries Hum, " and I —  
 ( I own it ) — have made too free with his wine ;  
 Old Crafticant will smoke me. By-the-bye !  
 This room is full of jewels as a mine, —  
 Dear valuable creatures, how ye shine !  
 Sometime to-day I must contrive a minute,  
 If Mercury propitiously incline,  
 To examine his scrutoire, and see what 's in it,  
 For of superfluous diamonds I as well may thin it.

## LXX.

" The Emperor's horrid bad ; yes, that's my cue ! "  
 Some histories say that this was Hum's last speech ;  
 That, being fuddled, he went reeling through  
 The corridor, and scarce upright could reach  
 The stair-head ; that being gluttled as a leech,  
 And us'd, as we ourselves have just now said,  
 To manage stairs reversely, like a peach  
 Too ripe, he fell, being puzzled in his head  
 With liquor and the staircase : verdict — *found stone dead.*

## LXXI.

This as a falsehood Crafticanto treats ;  
 And as his style is of strange elegance,  
 Gentle and tender, full of soft conceits,  
 ( Much like our Boswell's, ) we will take a glance  
 At his sweet prose, and, if we can, make dance  
 His woven periods into careless rhyme ;  
 O, little faery Pegasus ! rear — prance —  
 Trot round the quarto — ordinary time !  
 March, little Pegasus, with pawing hoof sublime !

## LXXII.

Well, let us see, — *tenth book and chapter nine*, —  
 Thus Crafticant pursues his diary: —  
 “ ’Twas twelve o’clock at night, the weather fine,  
 Latitude thirty-six; our scouts descry  
 A flight of starlings making rapidly  
 Towards Thibet. Mem.: — birds fly in the night;  
 From twelve to half-past — wings not fit to fly  
 For a thick fog — the Princess sulky quite;  
 Call’d for an extra shawl, and gave her nurse a bite.

## LXXIII.

“ Five minutes before one — brought down a moth  
 With my new double-barrel — stew’d the thighs  
 And made a very tolerable broth —  
 Princess turn’d dainty, to our great surprise,  
 Alter’d her mind, and thought it very nice;  
 Seeing her pleasant, try’d her with a pun,  
 She frown’d; a monstrous owl across us flies  
 About this time, — a sad old figure of fun;  
 Bad omen — this new match can’t be a happy one.

## LXXIV.

“ From two to half-past, dusky way we made,  
 Above the plains of Gobi, — desert, bleak;  
 Beheld afar off, in the hooded shade  
 Of darkness, a great mountain (strange to speak),  
 Spitting, from forth its sulphur-baken peak,  
 A fan-shap’d burst of blood-red, arrowy fire,  
 Turban’d with smoke, which still away did reek,  
 Solid and black from that eternal pyre,  
 Upon the laden winds that scanty could respire.

## LXXV.

“ Just upon three o’clock a falling star  
 Created an alarm among our troop,  
 Kill’d a man-cook, a page, and broke a jar,  
 A tureen, and three dishes, at one swoop,  
 Then passing by the princess, singed her hoop:



*THE CAP AND BELLS.*

579

Could not conceive what Coralline was at,  
She clapp'd her hands three times and cry'd out 'Whoop!'  
Some strange Imaian custom. A large bat  
Came sudden 'fore my face, and brush'd against my hat.

LXXVI.

" Five minutes thirteen seconds after three,  
Far in the west a mighty fire broke out,  
Conjectur'd, on the instant, it might be,  
The city of Balk — 'twas Balk beyond all doubt:  
A griffin, wheeling here and there about,  
Kept reconnoitring us — doubled our guard —  
Lighted our torches, and kept up a shout,  
'Till he sheer'd off — the Princess very scar'd —  
And many on their marrow-bones for death prepar'd.

LXXVII.

" At half-past three arose the cheerful moon —  
Bivouack'd for four minutes on a cloud —  
Where from the earth we heard a lively tune  
Of tambourines and pipes, serene and loud,  
While on a flowery lawn a brilliant crowd  
Cinque-parted danc'd, some half asleep reposed  
Beneath the green-fan'd cedars, some did shroud  
In silken tents, and 'mid light fragrance dozed,  
Or on the open turf their soothed eyelids closed.

LXXVIII.

" Dropp'd my gold watch, and kill'd a kettledrum —  
It went for apoplexy — foolish folks! —  
Left it to pay the piper — a good sum —  
(I've got a conscience, maugre people's jokes,)  
To scrape a little favour; 'gan to coax  
Her Highness' pug-dog — got a sharp rebuff —  
She wish'd a game at whist — made three revokes —  
Turn'd from myself, her partner, in a huff;  
His majesty will know her temper time enough.

LXXIX.

" She cry'd for chess — I play'd a game with her —  
Castled her king with such a vixen look,



It bodes ill to his Majesty — (refer  
 To the second chapter of my fortieth book,  
 And see what hoity-toity airs she took).  
 At half-past four the morn essay'd to beam —  
 Saluted, as we pass'd, an early rook —  
 The Princess fell asleep, and, in her dream,  
 Talk'd of one Master Hubert, deep in her esteem.

## LXXX.

“ About this time, — making delightful way, —  
 Shed a quill-feather from my larboard wing —  
 Wish'd, trusted, hop'd 'twas no sign of decay —  
 Thank heaven, I'm hearty yet! — 'twas no such thing: —  
 At five the golden light began to spring,  
 With fiery shudder through the bloomed east;  
 At six we heard Panthea's churches ring —  
 The city all his unhiv'd swarms had cast,  
 To watch our grand approach, and hail us as we pass'd.

## LXXXI.

“ As flowers turn their faces to the sun,  
 So on our flight with hungry eyes they gaze,  
 And, as we shap'd our course, this, that way run,  
 With mad-cap pleasure, or hand-clasp'd amaze;  
 Sweet in the air a mild-ton'd music plays,  
 And progresses through its own labyrinth;  
 Buds gather'd from the green spring's middle-days,  
 They scatter'd, — daisy, primrose, hyacinth, —  
 Or round white columns wreath'd from capital to plinth.

## LXXXII.

“ Onward we floated o'er the panting streets,  
 That seem'd throughout with upheld faces paved;  
 Look where we will, our bird's-eye vision meets  
 Legions of holiday; bright standards waved,  
 And fluttering ensigns emulously craved  
 Our minute's glance; a busy thunderous roar,  
 From square to square, among the buildings raved,  
 As when the sea, at flow, gluts up once more  
 The craggy hollowness of a wild reefed shore.

## LXXXIII.

“ And ‘ Bellanaine for ever ! ’ shouted they,  
 While that fair Princess, from her winged chair,  
 Bow’d low with high demeanour, and, to pay  
 Their new-blown loyalty with guerdon fair,  
 Still emptied at meet distance, here and there,  
 A plenty horn of jewels. And here I  
 (Who wish to give the devil her due) declare  
 Against that ugly piece of calumny,  
 Which calls them Highland pebble-stones not worth a fly.

## LXXXIV.

“ Still ‘ Bellanaine ! ’ they shouted, while we glide  
 ‘ Slant to a light Ionic portico,  
 The city’s delicacy, and the pride  
 Of our Imperial Basilic ; a row  
 Of lords and ladies, on each hand, make show  
 Submissive of knee-bent obeisance,  
 All down the steps ; and, as we enter’d, lo !  
 The strangest sight — the most unlook’d-for chance —  
 All things turn’d topsy-turvy in a devil’s dance.

## LXXXV.

“ ‘ Stead of his anxious Majesty and court  
 At the open doors, with wide saluting eyes,  
*Congtes* and scrape-graces of every sort,  
 And all the smooth routine of gallantries,  
 Was seen, to our immoderate surprise,  
 A motley crowd thick gather’d in the hall,  
 Lords, scullions, deputy-scul lions, with wild cries  
 Stunning the vestibule from wall to wall,  
 Where the Chief Justice on his knees and hands doth crawl.

## LXXXVI.

“ Counts of the palace, and the state purveyor  
 Of moth’s-down, to make soft the royal beds,  
 The Common Council and my fool Lord Mayor  
 Marching a-row, each other slipshod treads ;  
 Powder’d bag-wigs and ruffy-tuffy heads  
 Of cinder wenches meet and soil each other ;

Toe crush'd with heel ill-natur'd fighting breeds,  
 Frill-rumpling elbows brew up many a bother,  
 And fists in the short ribs keep up the yell and pother.

## LXXXVII.

“ A Poet, mounted on the Court-Clown's back,  
 Rode to the Princess swift with spurring heels,  
 And close into her face, with rhyming clack,  
 Began a Prothalamion; — she reels,  
 She falls, she faints! while laughter peels  
 Over her woman's weakness. ‘Where!’ cry'd I,  
 ‘Where is his Majesty?’ No person feels  
 Inclined to answer; wherefore instantly  
 I plung'd into the crowd to find him or to die.

## LXXXVIII.

“ Jostling my way I gain'd the stairs, and ran  
 To the first landing, where, incredible!  
 I met, far gone in liquor, that old man,  
 That vile impostor Hum. — ”  
 So far so well, —  
 For we have prov'd the Mago never fell  
 Down stairs on Crafticanto's evidence;  
 And therefore duly shall proceed to tell,  
 Plain in our own original mood and tense,  
 The sequel of this day, though labour 'tis immense!

\* \* \* \*

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Lord Houghton notes that “No more was written.” It is worth pointing out that the words *The sequel of this day*, by no means unnoteworthy, occur almost literally in a very noble context in the Poet Laureate's *Morte d'Arthur*. The final turned commas hitherto printed at the close of this stanza of course belong to the fourth line, where they mark the end of the long extract from Crafticant's journal.

**“NONSENSE VERSES.”**

**ON OXFORD.**

1.

**T**HE Gothic looks solemn,  
The plain Doric column  
Supports an old Bishop and Crosier ;  
The mouldering arch,  
Shaded o'er by a larch  
Stands next door to Wilson the Hosier.

2.

Vicè — that is, by turns, —  
O'er pale faces mourns  
The black tassell'd trencher and common hat ;  
The Chantry boy sings,  
The Steeple-bell rings,  
And as for the Chancellor — *dominat.*

3.

There are plenty of trees,  
And plenty of ease,  
And plenty of fat beer for Parsons ;  
And when it is venison,  
Short is the benisoh, —  
Then each on a leg or thigh fastens.

## SONNET TO MRS. REYNOLDS'S CAT.

CAT! who has [t] pass'd thy grand clima [c]teric,  
 How many mice and rats hast in thy days  
 Destroy'd? — How many tit bits stolen? Gaze  
 With those bright languid segments green, and prick  
 Those velvet ears — but pr'ythee do not stick  
 Thy latent talons in me — and upraise  
 Thy gentle mew — and tell me all thy frays  
 Of fish and mice, and rats and tender chick.  
 Nay, look not down, nor lick thy dainty wrists —  
 For all the wheezy asthma, — and for all  
 Thy tail's tip is nick'd off — and though the fists  
 Of many a maid has given thee many a maul,  
 Still is that fur as soft as when the lists  
 In youth thou enter'dst on glass bottled wall.

## A GALLOWAY SONG.

AH! ken ye what I met the day  
 Out oore the Mountains  
 A coming down by craggi [e]s grey  
 An mossie fountains —  
 A [h] goud hair'd Marie yeve I pray 5  
 Ane minute's guessing —  
 For that I met upon the way  
 Is past expressing.  
 As I stood where a rocky brig  
 A torrent crosses 10  
 I spied upon a misty rig  
 A troupe o' Horses —  
 And as they trotted down the glen  
 I sped to meet them  
 To see if I might know the Men 15  
 To stop and greet them.  
 First Willie on his sleek mare came  
 At canting gallop —  
 His long hair rustled like a flame  
 On board a shallop. 20  
 Then came his brother Rab and then  
 Young Peggy's Mither

And Peggy too — adown the glen  
 They went together —  
 I saw her wrappit in her hood 25  
 Fra wind and raining —  
 Her cheek was flush wi' timid blood  
 Twixt growth and waning —  
 She turn'd her dazed head full oft  
 For there her Brithers 30  
 Came riding with her Bridegroom soft  
 And mony ithers.  
 Young Tam came up an' eyed me quick  
 With reddened cheek —  
 Braw Tam was daffed like a chick — 35  
 He coud na speak —  
 Ah Marie they are all gane hame  
 Through blustering weather  
 An' every heart is full on flame  
 An' light as feather. 40  
 Ah! Marie they are all gone hame  
 Fra happy wedding,  
 Whilst I — Ah is it not a shame?  
 Sad tears am shedding.

BEN NEVIS: A DIALOGUE.

**T**HERE was one Mrs. Cameron of 50 years of age and the fattest woman in all Invernessshire who got up this Mountain some few years ago — true she had her servants — but then she had her self. She ought to have hired Sisyphus, — “Up the high hill he heaves a huge round — Mrs. Cameron.” 'Tis said a little conversation took place between the mountain and the Lady. After taking a glass of W[h]iskey as she was tolerably seated at ease she thus began —

MRS. C.

Upon my Life Sir Nevis I am pique'd  
 That I have so far panted tugg'd and reek'd  
 To do an honour to your old bald pate  
 And now am sitting on you just to bate,  
 Without your paying me one compliment. 5  
 Alas 'tis so with all, when our intent  
 Is plain, and in the eye of all Mankind  
 We fair ones show a preference, too blind!

You Gentle man immediately turn tail —  
 O let me then my hapless fate bewail ! 10  
 Ungrateful Baldpate have I not disdain'd  
 The pleasant Valleys — have I not madbrain'd  
 Deserted all my Pickles and preserves  
 My China closet too — with wretched Nerves  
 To boot — say wretched ingrate have I not 15  
 Le[f]t my soft cushion chair and caudle pot.  
 'Tis true I had no corns — no ! thank the fates  
 My Shoemaker was always Mr. Bates.  
 And if not Mr. Bates why I'm not old !  
 Still dumb ungrateful Nevis — still so cold ! 20

Here the Lady took some more w[h]iskey and was putting even  
 more to her lips when she dashed [it] to the Ground for the Mountain  
 began to grumble — which continued for a few minutes before he thus  
 began,

## BEN NEVIS.

What whining bit of tongue and Mouth thus dares  
 Disturb my slumber of a thousand years?  
 Even so long my sleep has been secure —  
 And to be so awaked I'll not endure.  
 Oh pain — for since the Eagle's earliest scream 25  
 I've had a dam[n]'d confounded ugly dream,  
 A Nightmare sure. What Madam was it you?  
 It cannot be ! My old eyes are not true !  
 Red-Crag, my Spectacles ! Now let me see !  
 Good Heavens Lady how the gemini 30  
 Did you get here? O I shall split my sides !  
 I shall earthquake ———

## MRS. C.

Sweet Nevis do not quake, for though I love  
 You[r] honest Countenance all things above  
 Truly I should not like to be convey'd 35  
 So far into your Bosom — gentle Maid  
 Loves not too rough a treatment gentle Sir —  
 Pray thee be calm and do not quake nor stir  
 No not a Stone or I shall go in fits —

## BEN NEVIS.

I must — I shall — I meet not such tit bits — 40  
 I meet not such sweet creatures every day —  
 By my old night cap night cap night and day

I must have one sweet Buss — I must and shall.  
 Red Crag! — What Madam can you then repent  
 Of all the toil and vigour you have spent 45  
 To see Ben Nevis and to touch his nose?  
 Red Crag I say! O I must have them close!  
 Red Crag, there lies beneath my farthest toe  
 A vein of Sulphur — go dear Red Crag, go —  
 And rub your flinty back against it — budge! 50  
 Dear Madam I must kiss you, faith I must!  
 I must Embrace you with my dearest gust!  
 Block-head, d'ye hear — Block-head I'll make her feel  
 There lies beneath my east leg's northern heel  
 A cave of young earth dragons — well my boy 55  
 Go thither quick and so complete my joy  
 Take you a bundle of the largest pines  
 And when the sun on fiercest Phosphor shines  
 Fire them and ram them in the Dragon's nest —  
 Then will the dragons fry and fizz their best 60  
 Until ten thousand now no bigger than  
 Poor Al[1]igators — poor things of one span —  
 Will each one swell to twice ten times the size  
 Of northern whale — then for the tender prize —  
 The *moment* then — for then will Red Crag rub 65  
 His flinty back — and I shall kiss and snub  
 And press my dainty morsel to my breast.  
 Block-head make haste!  
 O Muses weep the rest —  
 The Lady fainted and he thought her dead  
 So pulled the clouds again about his head 70  
 And went to sleep again — soon she was rous'd  
 By her affrighted servants — next day hous'd  
 Safe on the lowly ground she bless'd her fate  
 That fainting fit was not delayed too late.

But what surprises me above all is how this Lady got down again.

WOMEN, WINE AND SNUFF.

**G**IVE me women, wine and snuff  
 Until I cry out “hold, enough!”  
 You may do so sans objection  
 Till the day of resurrection;  
 For bless my beard they aye shall be  
 My beloved Trinity.



## TWO OR THREE.

TWO or three Posies	
With two or three simples —	
Two or three Noses	
With two or three pimples —	
Two or three wise men	5
And two or three ninny's —	
Two or three purses	
And two or three guineas —	
Two or three raps	
At two or three doors —	10
Two or three naps	
Of two or three hours —	
Two or three Cats	
And two or three mice —	
Two or three sprats	15
At a very great price —	
Two or three sandies	
And two or three tabbies —	
Two or three dandies	
And two Mrs. ———	<i>mum!</i> 20
Two or three Smiles	
And two or three frowns —	
Two or three Miles	
To two or three towns —	
Two or three pegs	25
For two or three bonnets —	
Two or three dove eggs	
To hatch into sonnets.	

## AN EXTEMPORE.

**W**HEN they were come into the Faery's Court  
 They rang — no one at home — all gone to sport  
 And dance and kiss and love as faerys do  
 For Faries be as humans lovers true —  
 Amid the woods they were so lone and wild ;  
 Where even the Robin feels himself exil'd  
 And where the very books as if affraid  
 Hurry along to some less magic shade.  
 ' No one at home ' ! the fretful princess cry'd

‘And all for nothing such a dre[a]ry ride 10  
 And all for nothing my new diamond cross  
 No one to see my persian feathers toss  
 No one to see my Ape, my Dwarf, my Fool  
 Or how I pace my Otaheitan mule.  
 Ape, Dwarf and Fool why stand you gaping there  
 Burst the door open, quick — or I declare  
 I’ll switch you soundly and in pieces tear.’  
 The Dwarf began to tremble and the Ape  
 Star’d at the Fool, the Fool was all agape  
 The Princess grasp’d her switch but just in time 20  
 The Dwarf with piteous face began to rhyme.  
 “O mighty Princess did you ne’er hear tell  
 What your poor servants know but too too well  
 Know you the three great crimes in faery land  
 The first alas! poor Dwarf I understand 25  
 I made a whipstock of a faery’s wand  
 The next is snoring in their company  
 The next the last the direst of the three  
 Is making free when they are not at home.  
 I was a Prince — a baby prince — my doom 30  
 You see, I made a whipstock of a wand  
 My top has henceforth slept in faery land.  
 He was a Prince the Fool, a grown up Prince  
 But he has never been a King’s son since  
 He fell a snoring at a faery Ball 35  
 Your poor Ape was a Prince and he poor thing  
 Picklock’d a faery’s boudour — now no king  
 But ape — so pray your highness stay awhile  
 ’Tis sooth indeed we know it to our sorrow —  
 Persist and *you* may be an ape tomorrow — 40  
 While the Dwarf spake the Princess all for spite  
 Peal’d the brown hazel twig to lilly white  
 Clench’d her small teeth, and held her lips apart  
 Try’d to look unconcerned with beating heart.  
 They saw her highness had made up her mind 45  
 And quaver’d like the reeds before the wind  
 And they had had it, but O happy chance  
 The Ape for very fear began to dance  
 And grin’d as all his ugliness did ache —  
 She staid her vixen fingers for his sake 50  
 He was so very ugly: then she took  
 Her pocket mirror and began to look  
 First at herself and [then] at him and then  
 She smil’d at her own beauteous face again.

Yet for all this — for all her pretty face 55  
 She took it in her head to see the place.  
 Women gain little from experience  
 Either in Lovers, husbands or expense.  
 The more their beauty the more fortune too  
 Beauty before the wide world never knew. 60  
 So each fair reasons — tho' it oft miscarries.  
 She thought *her* pretty face would please the fa[e]ries.  
 " My darling Ape I wont whip you today  
 Give me the Picklock sirrah and go play."  
 They all three wept but counsel was as vain 65  
 As crying cup biddy to drops of rain.  
 Yet lingeringly did the sad Ape forth draw  
 The Picklock from the Pocket in his Jaw.  
 The Princess took it and dismounting straight  
 Trip'd in blue silver'd slippers to the gate 70  
 And touch'd the wards, the Door full courteously  
 Opened — she enter'd with her servants three.  
 Again it clos'd and there was nothing seen  
 But the Mule grasing on the herbage green.

End of Canto xii

Canto the xiii

- The Mule no sooner saw himself alone  
 Than he prick'd up his Ears — and said ' well done !  
 At least unhappy Prince I may be free —  
 No more a Princess shall side saddle me  
 O King of Othaiete — tho' a Mule 5  
 ' Aye every inch a King ' — tho' ' Fortune's fool.'  
 Well done — for by what Mr. Dwarfy said  
 I would not give a sixpence for her head.'  
 Even as he spake he trotted in high glee  
 To the knotty side of an old Pollard tree 10  
 And rub'd his sides against the mossed bark  
 Till his Girths burst and left him naked stark  
 Except his Bridle — how get rid of that  
 Buckled and tied with many a twist and plait.  
 At last it struck him to pretend to sleep 15  
 And then the thievish Monkies down would creep  
 And filch the unpleasant trammels quite away.  
 No sooner thought of than adown he lay  
 Sham'd a good snore — the Monkey-men descended  
 And whom they thought to injure they befriended. 20  
 They hung his Bridle on a topmost bough  
 And of[f] he went run, trot, or anyhow —



**APPENDIX.**



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I.

REVIEW OF KEATS'S  
FIRST VOLUME OF POEMS (1817)

WRITTEN BY LEIGH HUNT

*and published in "The Examiner" for the 1st of June and the 6th  
and 13th of July 1817.*

THIS is the production of the young writer, whom we had the pleasure of announcing to the public a short time since, and several of whose Sonnets have appeared meanwhile in the *Examiner* with the signature of J. K. From these and stronger evidences in the book itself, the readers will conclude that the author and his critic are personal friends; and they are so, — made however, in the first instance, by nothing but his poetry, and at no greater distance of time than the announcement above-mentioned. We had published one of his Sonnets in our paper, without knowing more of him than any other anonymous correspondent; but at the period in question, a friend brought us one morning some copies of verses, which he said were from the pen of a youth. We had not been led, generally speaking, by a good

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Hunt refers in the opening sentence to an article entitled "Young Poets," which had appeared in *The Examiner* for the 1st of December 1816. "The last of these young aspirants whom we have met with," he says, "and who promise to help the new school to revive Nature and

To put a spirit of youth in every thing, —

is, we believe, the youngest of them all. His name is John Keats. He has not yet published anything except in a newspaper; but a set of his manuscripts was handed us the other day, and fairly surprised us with the truth of their ambition, and ardent grappling with Nature." Hunt then prints the sonnet on Chapman's Homer, with the further remarks quoted at page 46. The sonnet which had been published in *The Examiner* before Hunt's introduction to the "set of manuscripts" was that given at page 51. Those published between the 1st of December 1816 and the 1st of June 1817 in *The Examiner* were the sonnets to Kosciusko, "After dark vapors," on the Elgin Marbles and to Haydon, and on *The Floure and the Lefe*.

deal of experience in these matters, to expect pleasure from introductions of the kind, so much as pain; but we had not read more than a dozen lines, when we recognized "a young poet indeed."

It is no longer a new observation, that poetry has of late years undergone a very great change, or rather, to speak properly, poetry has undergone no change, but something which was not poetry has made way for the return of something which is. The school which existed till lately since the restoration of Charles the 2d, was rather a school of wit and ethics in verse, than any thing else; nor was the verse, with the exception of Dryden's, of the best order. The authors, it is true, are to be held in great honour. Great wit there certainly was, excellent satire, excellent sense, pithy sayings; and Pope distilled as much real poetry as could be got from the drawing-room world in which the art then lived, — from the flowers and luxuries of artificial life, — into that exquisite little toilet-bottle of essence, the *Rape of the Lock*. But there was little imagination, of a higher order, no intense feeling of nature, no sentiment, no real music or variety. Even the writers who gave evidences meanwhile of a truer poetical faculty, Gray, Thomson, Akenside, and Collins himself, were content with a great deal of second-hand workmanship, and with false styles made up of other languages and a certain kind of inverted cant. It has been thought that Cowper was the first poet who re-opened the true way to nature and a natural style; but we hold this to be a mistake, arising merely from certain negations on the part of that amiable but by no means powerful writer. Cowper's style is for the most part as inverted and artificial as that of the others; and we look upon him to have been by nature not so great a poet as Pope: but Pope, from certain infirmities on his part, was thrown into the society of the world, and thus had to get what he could out of an artificial sphere: — Cowper, from other and more distressing infirmities, (which by the way the wretched superstition that undertook to heal, only burnt in upon him) was confined to a still smaller though more natural sphere, and in truth did not much with it, though quite as much perhaps as was to be expected from an organization too sore almost to come in contact with any thing.

It was the Lake Poets in our opinion (however grudgingly we say it, on some accounts) that were the first to revive a true taste for nature; and like most Revolutionists, especially of the cast which they have since turned out to be, they went to an extreme, calculated rather at first to make the readers of poetry disgusted with originality and adhere with contempt and resentment to their magazine commonplaces. This had a bad effect also in the way of re-action; and none of those writers have ever since been able to free themselves from certain stubborn affectations, which having been ignorantly

confounded by others with the better part of them, have been retained by their self-love with a still less pardonable want of wisdom. The greater part indeed of the poetry of Mr. Southey, a weak man in all respects, is really made up of little else. Mr. Coleridge still trifles with his poetical as he has done with his metaphysical talent. Mr. Lamb, in our opinion, has a more real tact of humanity, a modester, Shakspearean wisdom, than any of them; and had he written more, might have delivered the school victoriously from all its defects. But it is Mr. Wordsworth who has advanced it the most, and who in spite of some morbidities as well as mistaken theories in other respects, has opened upon us a fund of thinking and imagination, that ranks him as the successor of the true and abundant poets of the older time. Poetry, like Plenty, should be represented with a cornucopia, but it should be a real one; not swelled out and insidiously *optimized* at the top, like Mr. Southey's stale strawberry baskets, but fine and full to the depth, like a heap from the vintage. Yet from the time of Milton till lately, scarcely a tree had been planted that could be called a poet's own. People got shoots from France, that ended in nothing but a little barren wood, from which they made flutes for young gentlemen and fan-sticks for ladies. The rich and enchanted ground of real poetry, fertile with all that English succulence could produce, bright with all that Italian sunshine could lend, and haunted with exquisite humanities, had become invisible to mortal eyes like the garden of Eden:—

And from that time those Graces were not found.

THESE Graces, however, are re-appearing; and one of the greatest evidences is the little volume before us; for the work is not one of mere imitation, or a compilation of ingenious and promising things that merely announce better, and that after all might only help to keep up a bad system; but here is a young poet giving himself up to his own impressions, and revelling in real poetry for its own sake. He has had his advantages, because others have cleared the way into those happy bowers; but it shews the strength of his natural tendency, that he has not been turned aside by the lingering enticements of a former system, and by the self-love which interests others in enforcing them. We do not, of course, mean to say, that Mr. Keats has as much talent as he will have ten years hence, or that there are no imitations in his book, or that he does not make mistakes common to inexperience;—the reverse is inevitable at his time of life. In proportion to our ideas, or impressions of the images of things, must be our acquaintance with the things themselves. But our author has all the sensitiveness of temperament requisite to receive these



Impressions; and wherever he has turned hitherto, he has evidently felt them deeply.

The very faults indeed of Mr. Keats arise from a passion for beauties, and a young impatience to vindicate them; and as we have mentioned these, we shall refer to them at once. They may be comprised in two;—first, a tendency to notice every thing too indiscriminately and without an eye to natural proportion and effect; and second, a sense of the proper variety of versification without a due consideration of its principles.

The former error is visible in several parts of the book, but chiefly though mixed with great beauties in the Epistles, and more between pages 28 and 47,<sup>1</sup> where are collected the author's earliest pieces, some of which, we think, might have been omitted, especially the string of magistrate-interrogatories about a shell and a copy of verses. See also (p. 61)<sup>2</sup> a comparison of wine poured out in heaven to the appearance of a falling star, and (p. 62)<sup>3</sup> the sight of far-seen fountains in the same region to "silver streaks across a dolphin's fin." It was by thus giving way to every idea that came across him, that Marino, a man of real poetical fancy, but no judgment, corrupted the poetry of Italy; a catastrophe, which however we by no means anticipate from our author, who with regard to this point is much more deficient in age than in good taste. We shall presently have to notice passages of a reverse nature, and these are by far the most numerous. But we warn him against a fault, which is the more tempting to a young writer of genius, inasmuch as it involves something so opposite to the contented common-place and vague generalities of the late school of poetry. There is a super-abundance of detail, which, though not so wanting, of course, in power of perception, is as faulty and unseasonable sometimes as common-place. It depends upon circumstances, whether we are to consider ourselves near enough, as it were, to the subject we are describing to grow microscopical upon it. A person basking in a landscape for instance, and a person riding through it, are in two very different situations for the exercise of their eyesight; and even where the license is most allowable, care must be taken not to give to small things and great, to nice detail and to general feeling, the same proportion of effect. Errors of this kind in poetry answer to a want of perspective in painting, and of a due distribution of light and shade. To give an excessive instance in the former art, there was Denner, who copied faces to a nicety amounting to a horrible want of it, like Brobdignagian visages encountered by Gulliver; and who, according to the facetious Peter Pindar,

Make a bird's beak appear at twenty mile.

<sup>1</sup> That is to say, the poems occupying pages 11 to 23.    <sup>2</sup> Page 35.    <sup>3</sup> Page 35.

And the same kind of specimen is afforded in poetry by Darwin, a writer now almost forgotten and deservedly, but who did good in his time by making unconscious caricatures of all the poetical faults in vogue, and flattering himself that the sum total went to the account of his original genius. Darwin would describe a dragon-fly and a lion in the same terms of proportion. You did not know which he would have scrambled from the sooner. His pictures were like the two-penny sheets which the little boys buy, and in which you see J Jackdaw and K King, both of the same dimensions.

Mr. Keats's other fault, the one in his versification, arises from a similar cause, — that of contradicting over-zealously the fault on the opposite side. It is this which provokes him now and then into mere roughnesses and discords for their own sake, not for that of variety and contrasted harmony. We can manage, by substituting a greater feeling for a smaller, a line like the following: —

I shall roll on the grass with two-fold ease; —

but by no contrivance of any sort can we prevent this from jumping out of the heroic measure into mere rhythmicality, —

How many bards gild the lapses of time!

We come now however to the beauties; and the reader will easily perceive that they not only outnumber the faults a hundred fold, but that they are of a nature decidedly opposed to what is false and inharmonious. Their characteristics indeed are a fine ear, a fancy and imagination at will, and an intense feeling of external beauty in it's most natural and least expressible simplicity.

We shall give some specimens of the least beauty first, and conclude with a noble extract or two that will shew the second, as well as the powers of our young poet in general. The harmony of his verses will appear throughout.

The first poem consists of a piece of luxury in a rural spot, ending with an allusion to the story of Endymion, and to the origin of other lovely tales of mythology, on the ground suggested by Mr. Wordsworth in a beautiful passage of his *Excursion*. Here, and in the other largest poem, which closes the book, Mr. Keats is seen to his best advantage, and displays all that fertile power of association and imagery which constitutes the abstract poetical faculty as distinguished from every other. He wants age for a greater knowledge of humanity, but evidences of this also bed forth here and there. To come however to our specimens: —

The first page of the book presents us with a fancy, founded, as all

beautiful fancies are, on a strong sense of what really exists or occurs. He is speaking of

*A gentle Air in Solitude.*

There crept  
A little noiseless noise among the leaves,  
Born of the very sigh that silence heaves.

*Young Trees.*

There too should be  
The frequent chequer of a youngling tree,  
That with a score of light green brethren shoots  
From the quaint mossiness of aged roots :  
Round which is heard a spring-head of clear waters.

Any body who has seen a throng of young beeches, furnishing those natural clumpy seats at the root, must recognise the truth and grace of this description. The remainder of this part of the poem, especially from —

Open afresh your round of starry folds,  
Ye ardent marigolds ! —

down to the bottom of page 5, affords an exquisite proof of close observation of nature as well as the most luxuriant fancy.

*The Moon.*

Lifting her silver rim  
Above a cloud, and with a gradual swim  
Coming into the blue with all her light.

*Fir Trees.*

Fir trees grow around,  
Aye dropping their hard fruit upon the ground.

This last line is in the taste of the Greek simplicity.

*A starry Sky.*

The dark silent blue  
With all it's diamonds trembling through and through

*Sound of a Pipe.*

And some are hearing eagerly the wild  
Thrilling liquidity of dewy piping.

The *Specimen of an Induction to a Poem*, and the fragment of the Poem itself entitled *Calidore*, contain some very natural touches on the human side of things; as when speaking of a lady who is anxiously looking out on the top of a tower for her defender, he describes her as one

Who cannot feel for cold her tender feet;

and when *Calidore* has fallen into a fit of amorous abstraction, he says that

— The kind voice of good Sir Clerimond  
Came to his ear, as something from beyond  
His present being.

THE *Epistles*, the *Sonnets*, and indeed the whole of the book, contain strong evidences of warm and social feelings, but particularly the *Epistle to Charles Cowden Clarke*, and the *Sonnet to his own Brothers*, in which the “faint cracklings” of the coal-fire are said to be

Like whispers of the household gods that keep  
A gentle empire o'er fraternal souls.

The *Epistle to Mr. Clarke* is very amiable as well as poetical, and equally honourable to both parties, — to the young writer who can be so grateful towards his teacher, and to the teacher who had the sense to perceive his genius, and the qualities to call forth his affection. It consists chiefly of recollections of what his friend had pointed out to him in poetry and in general taste; and the lover of Spenser will readily judge of his preceptor's qualifications, even from a single triplet, in which he is described, with a deep feeling of simplicity, as one

Who had beheld Belphebe in a brook,  
And lovely Una in a leafy nook,  
And Archimago leaning o'er his book.

The *Epistle* thus concludes: —

*Picture of Companionship.*

But many days have past —  
Since I have walked with you through shady lanes,  
That freshly terminate in open plains,

\* \* \* \* \*

In those still moments I have wished you joys  
That well you know to honour: — “Life's very toys

With him," said I, " will take a pleasant charm ;  
It cannot be that ought will work him harm."<sup>1</sup>

And we can only add, without any disrespect to the graver warmth of our young poet, that if Ought attempted it, Ought would find he had stout work to do with more than one person.

The following passage in one of the Sonnets passes, with great happiness, from the mention of physical associations to mental ; and concludes with a feeling which must have struck many a contemplative mind, that has found the sea-shore like a border, as it were, of existence. He is speaking of

*The Ocean.*

The Ocean with it's vastness, it's blue green,  
It's ships, it's rocks, it's caves, — it's hopes, it's fears, —  
It's voice mysterious, which whoso hears  
Must think on what will be, and what has been.

We have read somewhere the remark of a traveller, who said that when he was walking alone at night-time on the sea-shore, he felt conscious of the earth, not as the common every day sphere it seems, but as one of the planets, rolling round with him in the mightiness of space. The same feeling is common to imaginations that are not in need of similar local excitements.

The best poem is certainly the last and longest, entitled *Sleep and Poetry*. It originated in sleeping in a room adorned with busts and pictures, and is a striking specimen of the restlessness of the young poetical appetite, obtaining its food by the very desire of it, and glancing for fit subjects of creation " from earth to heaven." Nor do we like it the less for an impatient, and as it may be thought by some, irreverend assault upon the late French school of criticism and monotony, which has held poetry chained long enough to render it somewhat indignant when it has got free.

The following ardent passage is highly imaginative : —

*An Aspiration after Poetry.*

O Poesy ! for thee I grasp my pen  
That am not yet a glorious denizen  
Of thy wide heaven ; yet, to my ardent prayer,  
Yield from thy sanctuary some clear air, &c.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I have omitted ten lines from Hunt's quotation ; but see page 41.

<sup>2</sup> Hunt, it will be seen, took the liberty of compressing his quotation by silently omitting seven lines and piecing two fragments of lines. He continued the quotation for twenty-eight lines more : see pages 53 and 54.

Mr. Keats takes an opportunity, though with very different feelings towards the school than he has exhibited towards the one above-mentioned, to object to the morbidity that taints the productions of the Lake Poets. They might answer perhaps, generally, that they chuse to grapple with what is unavoidable, rather than pretend to be blind to it; but the more smiling Muse may reply, that half of the evils alluded to are produced by brooding over them; and that it is much better to strike at as many *causes* of the rest as possible, than to pretend to be satisfied with them in the midst of the most evident dissatisfaction.

*Happy Poetry Preferred.*

These things are doubtless: yet in truth we've had  
Strange thunders from the potency of song;  
Mingled indeed with what is sweet and strong,  
From majesty: but in clear truth the themes  
Are ugly cubs, the Poets Polyphemes  
Disturbing the grand sea. A drainless shower  
Of light is poesy; 'tis the supreme of power;  
'Tis might half slumb'ring on its own right arm.  
The very archings of her eye-lids charm  
A thousand willing agents to obey.  
And still she governs with the mildest sway:  
But strength alone though of the Muses born  
Is like a fallen angel; trees uptorn,  
Darkness, and worms, and shrouds, and sepulchres  
Delight it; for it feeds upon the burrs  
And thorns of life; forgetting the great end  
Of poesy, that it should be a friend  
To soothe the cares, and lift the thoughts of man.

We conclude with the beginning of the paragraph which follows this passage, and which contains an idea of as lovely and powerful a nature in embodying an abstraction, as we ever remember to have seen put in words:—

Yet I rejoice: a myrtle fairer than  
E'er grew in Paphos, from the bitter weeds  
Lift's it's sweet head into the air, *and feeds*  
*A silent space with ever sprouting green.*

Upon the whole, Mr. Keats's book cannot be better described than in a couplet written by Milton when he too was young, and in which he evidently alludes to himself. It is a little luxuriant heap of

Such sights as youthful poets dream  
On summer eves by haunted stream.

## II.

## FOUR SONNETS FROM LEIGH HUNT'S FOLIAGE

TO JOHN KEATS.

'TIS well you think me truly one of those,  
 Whose sense discerns the loveliness of things;  
 For surely as I feel the bird that sings  
 Behind the leaves, or dawn as it up grows,  
 Or the rich bee rejoicing as he goes,  
 Or the glad issue of emerging springs,  
 Or overhead the glide of a dove's wings,  
 Or turf, or trees, or, midst of all, repose.  
 And surely as I feel things lovelier still,  
 The human look, and the harmonious form  
 Containing woman, and the smile in ill,  
 And such a heart as Charles's,<sup>1</sup> wise and warm, —  
 As surely as all this, I see, ev'n now,  
 Young Keats, a flowering laurel on your brow.

ON RECEIVING A CROWN OF IVY FROM THE SAME.

A CROWN of ivy! I submit my head  
 To the young hand that gives it, — young, 'tis true,  
 But with a right, for 'tis a poet's too.  
 How pleasant the leaves feel! and how they spread  
 With their broad angles, like a nodding shed  
 Over both eyes! and how complete and new,  
 As on my hand I lean, to feel them strew  
 My sense with freshness, — Fancy's rustling bed!  
 Tress-tossing girls, with smell of flowers and grapes  
 Come dancing by, and downward piping cheeks,  
 And up-thrown cymbals, and Silenus old

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Although it may not be strictly relevant, it will interest some readers to know that these sonnets are transcribed for the present appendix from Keats's own copy of *Foliage; or Poems Original and Translated, by Leigh Hunt* (1818), bearing upon the title-page, in Hunt's beautiful writing, the words "John Keats from his affectionate friend the Author." Keats gave the book to Miss Brawne; and it is now in my possession.

<sup>1</sup> Hunt notes "Charles C. C. [Cowden Clarke], a mutual friend."

*FOUR SONNETS FROM LEIGH HUNT'S FOLIAGE.* 603

Lumpishly borne, and many trampling shapes, —  
And lastly, with his bright eyes on her bent,  
Bacchus, — whose bride has of his hand fast hold.

ON THE SAME.

**I**T is a lofty feeling, yet a kind,  
Thus to be topped with leaves ; — to have a sense  
Of honour-shaded thought, — an influence  
As from great Nature's fingers, and be twined  
With her old, sacred, verdurous ivy-bind,  
As though she hallowed with that sylvan fence  
A head that bows to her benevolence,  
Midst pomp of fancied trumpets in the wind.  
'Tis what's within us crowned. And kind and great  
Are all the conquering wishes it inspires, —  
Love of things lasting, love of the tall woods,  
Love of love's self, and ardour for a state  
Of natural good befitting such desires,  
Towns without gain, and haunted solitudes.

TO THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE CRICKET.

**G**REEN little vaulter in the sunny grass  
Catching your heart up at the feel of June,  
Sole voice that's heard amidst the lazy noon,  
When ev'n the bees lag at the summoning brass ;  
And you, warm little housekeeper, who class  
With those who think the candles come too soon,  
Loving the fire, and with your tricksome tune  
Nick the glad silent moments as they pass ;  
Oh sweet and tiny cousins, that belong,  
One to the fields, the other to the hearth,  
Both have your sunshine ; both though small are strong  
At your clear hearts ; and both were sent on earth  
To sing in thoughtful ears this natural song, —  
In doors and out, summer and winter, Mirth.

30th December, 1816.



## III.

## SONNET.

WRITTEN ON THE BLANK LEAF OF KEATS'S POEMS (1817) BY  
CHARLES OLLIER.

KEATS I admire thine upward daring Soul,  
Thine eager grasp at immortality  
I deem within thy reach ; — rejoic'd I see  
Thee spurn, with brow serene, the gross controul  
Of circumstance, while o'er thee visions roll  
In radiant pomp of lovely Poesy !  
She points to blest abodes where spirits free  
Feed on her smiles and her great name extol. —  
Still shall the pure flame bright within thee burn  
While nature's voice alone directs thy mind ;  
Who bids thy speculation inward turn  
Assuring thee her transcript thou shalt find.  
Live her's — live freedom's friend — so round thine urn  
The oak shall with thy laurels be entwin'd.

## IV.

LETTER FROM MESSRS. C. & J. OLLIER TO GEORGE  
KEATS CONCERNING KEATS'S POEMS (1817).

*Reprinted from "The Athenæum" for the 7th of June 1873.*

SIR, — We regret that your brother ever requested us to publish his book, or that our opinion of its talent should have led us to acquiesce in undertaking it. We are, however, much obliged to you for relieving us from the unpleasant necessity of declining any further connexion with it, which we must have done, as we think the curiosity is satisfied, and the sale has dropped. By far the greater number of persons who have purchased it from us have found fault with it in such plain terms, that we have in many cases offered to take the book back

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I have no evidence of the authorship of this sonnet beyond the hand-writing; but I have no doubt about its being the writing of Charles Ollier. The sonnet is dated the 2nd of March 1817, and represents a far pleasanter phase of Keats's connexion with his first publisher than that represented by the next appendix.

rather than be annoyed with the ridicule which has, time after time, been showered upon it. In fact, it was only on Saturday last that we were under the mortification of having our own opinion of its merits flatly contradicted by a gentleman, who told us he considered it 'no better than a take in.' These are unpleasant imputations for any one in business to labour under, but we should have borne them and concealed their existence from you had not the style of your note shewn us that such delicacy would be quite thrown away. We shall take means without delay of ascertaining the number of copies on hand, and you shall be informed accordingly.

Your most, etc.

C. & J. Ollier.

3, Welbeck Street, 29th April, 1817.

V.

REVIEW OF ENDYMION.

*Published in the "Quarterly Review."*

REVIEWERS have sometimes been accused of not reading the works which they affected to criticise. On the present occasion we shall anticipate the author's complaint, and honestly confess that we have not read his work. Not that we have been wanting in our duty — far from it — indeed, we have made efforts almost as superhuman as the story itself appears to be, to get through it; but with the fullest stretch of our perseverance, we are forced to confess that we have not been able to struggle beyond the first of the four books of which this Poetic Romance consists. We should extremely lament this want of energy, or whatever it may be, on our parts, were it not for one consolation — namely, that we are no better acquainted with the meaning of the book through which we have so painfully toiled, than we are with that of the three which we have not looked into.

It is not that Mr. Keats, (if that be his real name, for we almost doubt that any man in his senses would put his real name to such a rhapsody,) it is not, we say, that the author has not powers of language, rays of fancy, and gleams of genius — he has all these; but he is unhappily a disciple of the new school of what has been some-

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This is the review immortalized, as far as things hateful can be, by Shelley in his *Adonais*. It is a curiously unimportant production; but it is well that it should be in evidence. It appeared in No. XXXVII of the review, headed "April, 1818" on page 1, but described on the wrapper as "published in September, 1818."

where called Cockney poetry; which may be defined to consist of the most incongruous ideas in the most uncouth language.

Of this school, Mr. Leigh Hunt, as we observed in a former Number, aspires to be the hierophant. Our readers will recollect the pleasant recipes for harmonious and sublime poetry which he gave us in his preface to 'Rimini' and the still more facetious instances of his harmony and sublimity in the verses themselves; and they will recollect above all the contempt of Pope, Johnson, and such like poetasters and pseudo-critics, which so forcibly contrasted itself with Mr. Leigh Hunt's self-complacent approbation of

— 'all the things itself had wrote,  
Of special merit though of little note.'

This author is a copyist of Mr. Hunt; but he is more unintelligible, almost as rugged, twice as diffuse, and ten times more tiresome and absurd than his prototype, who, though he impudently presumed to seat himself in the chair of criticism, and to measure his own poetry by his own standard, yet generally had a meaning. But Mr. Keats had advanced no dogmas which he was bound to support by examples; his nonsense therefore is quite gratuitous; he writes it for its own sake, and, being bitten by Mr. Leigh Hunt's insane criticism, more than rivals the insanity of his poetry.

Mr. Keats's preface hints that his poem was produced under peculiar circumstances.

'Knowing within myself (he says) the manner in which this Poem has been produced, it is not without a feeling of regret that I make it public. — What manner I mean, will be *quite clear* to the reader, who must soon perceive great inexperience, immaturity, and every error denoting a feverish attempt, rather than a deed accomplished.' — *Preface*, p. vii.

We humbly beg his pardon, but this does not appear to us to be *quite so clear* — we really do not know what he means — but the next passage is more intelligible.

'The two first books, and indeed the two last, I feel sensible are not of such completion as to warrant their passing the press.' — *Preface*, p. vii.

Thus 'the two first books' are, even in his own judgment, unfit to appear, and 'the two last' are, it seems, in the same condition — and as two and two make four, and as that is the whole number of books, we have a clear and, we believe, a very just estimate of the entire work.

Mr. Keats, however, deprecates criticism on this 'immature and feverish work' in terms which are themselves sufficiently feverish; and

we confess that we should have abstained from inflicting upon him any of the tortures of the '*ferce hell*' of criticism, which terrify his imagination, if he had not begged to be spared in order that he might write more; if we had not observed in him a certain degree of talent which deserves to be put in the right way, or which, at least, ought to be warned of the wrong; and if, finally, he had not told us that he is of an age and temper which imperiously require mental discipline.

Of the story we have been able to make out but little; it seems to be mythological, and probably relates to the loves of Diana and Endymion; but of this, as the scope of the work has altogether escaped us, we cannot speak with any degree of certainty; and must therefore content ourselves with giving some instances of its diction and versification: — and here again we are perplexed and puzzled. — At first it appeared to us, that Mr. Keats had been amusing himself and wearying his readers with an immeasurable game at *bouts-rimés*; but, if we recollect rightly, it is an indispensable condition at this play, that the rhymes when filled up shall have a meaning; and our author, as we have already hinted, has no meaning. He seems to us to write a line at random, and then he follows not the thought excited by this line, but that suggested by the *rhyme* with which it concludes. There is hardly a complete couplet inclosing a complete idea in the whole book. He wanders from one subject to another, from the association, not of ideas but of sounds, and the work is composed of hemistichs which, it is quite evident, have forced themselves upon the author by the mere force of the catchwords on which they turn.

We shall select, not as the most striking instance, but as that least liable to suspicion, a passage from the opening of the poem.

———— ‘ Such the sun, the moon,  
Trees old and young, sprouting a shady boon  
For simple sheep; and such are daffodils  
With the green world they live in; and clear rills  
That for themselves a cooling covert make  
'Gainst the hot season; the mid forest brake,  
Rich with a sprinkling of fair musk-rose blooms:  
And such too is the grandeur of the dooms  
We have imagined for the mighty dead; &c. &c.’ — pp. 3, 4.

Here it is clear that the word, and not the idea, *moon* produces the simple sheep and their shady *boon*, and that ‘the *dooms* of the mighty dead’ would never have intruded themselves but for the ‘*fair musk-rose blooms*.’

Again.

‘ For 'twas the morn: Apollo's upward fire  
Made every eastern cloud a silvery pyre

Of brightness so unsullied, that therein  
 A melancholy spirit well might win  
 Oblivion, and melt out his essence fine  
 Into the winds: rain-scented eglantine  
 Gave temperate sweets to that well-wooing sun;  
 The lark was lost in him; cold springs had run  
 To warm their chilliest bubbles in the grass;  
 Man's voice was on the mountains; and the mass  
 Of nature's lives and wonders puls'd tenfold,  
 To feel this sun-rise and its glories old.' — p. 8.

Here Apollo's *fire* produces a *pyre*, a silvery pry of clouds, *wherewith* a spirit might *win* oblivion and melt his essence *fine*, and scented *eglantine* gives sweets to the *sun*, and cold springs had *run* into the *grass*, and then the pulse of the *mass* pulsed *tenfold* to feel the glories *old* of the new-born day, &c.

One example more.

'Be still the unimaginable lodge  
 For solitary thinkings; such as dodge  
 Conception to the very bourne of heaven,  
 Then leave the naked brain: be still the leaven,  
 That spreading in this dull and clodded earth  
 Gives it a touch ethereal — a new birth.' — p. 17.

*Lodge. dodge — heaven, leaven — earth, birth*; such, in six words, is the sum and substance of six lines.

We come now to the author's taste in versification. He cannot indeed write a sentence, but perhaps he may be able to spin a line. Let us see. The following are specimens of his prosodial notions of our English heroic metre.

'Dear as the temple's self, so does the moon,  
 The passion poesy, glories infinite.' — p. 4.

'So plenteously all weed-hidden roots.' — p. 6.

'Of some strange history, potent to send.' — p. 18.

'Before the deep intoxication.' — p. 27.

'Her scarf into a fluttering pavilion.' — p. 33.

'The stubborn canvass for my voyage prepared —.' — p. 39.

‘ ‘Endymion! the cave is secreter  
 Than the isle of Delos. Echo hence shall stir  
 No sighs but sigh-warm kisses, or light noise  
 Of thy combing hand, the while it travelling cloys  
 And trembles through my labyrinthine hair.’ — p. 48.

By this time our readers must be pretty well satisfied as to the meaning of his sentences and the structure of his lines: we now present them with some of the new words with which, in imitation of Mr. Leigh Hunt, he adorns our language.

We are told that ‘turtles *passion* their voices,’ (p. 15); that ‘an harbour was *nested*,’ (p. 23); and a lady’s locks ‘*gordian’d* up,’ (p. 32); and to supply the place of the nouns thus verbalized Mr. Keats, with great fecundity, spawns new ones; such as ‘men-slugs and human *serpentry*,’ (p. 41); the ‘*honey-feel* of bliss,’ (p. 45); ‘wives prepare *needments*,’ (p. 13) — and so forth.

Then he has formed new verbs by the process of cutting off their natural tails, the adverbs, and affixing them to their foreheads; thus, ‘the wine out-sparkled,’ (p. 10); the ‘multitude up-followed,’ (p. 11); and ‘night up-took,’ (p. 29). ‘The wind up-blows,’ (p. 32); and the ‘hours are down-sunken,’ (p. 36.)

But if he sinks some adverbs in the verbs he compensates the language with adverbs and adjectives which he separates from the parent stock. Thus, a lady ‘whispers *pantingly* and close,’ makes ‘*hushing* signs,’ and steers her skiff into a ‘*rippy* cove,’ (p. 23): a shower falls ‘*refreshfully*,’ (45); and a vulture has a ‘*spreaded* tail,’ (p. 44.)

But enough of Mr. Leigh Hunt and his simple neophyte. — If any one should be bold enough to purchase this ‘Poetic Romance,’ and so much more patient, than ourselves, as to get beyond the first book, and so much more fortunate as to find a meaning, we entreat him to make us acquainted with his success; we shall then return to the task which we now abandon in despair, and endeavour to make all due amends to Mr. Keats and to our readers.

## VI.

## REVIEW OF ENDYMION AND LAMIA &amp;c.

*Published in the "Edinburgh Review."*

WE had never happened to see either of these volumes till very lately — and have been exceedingly struck with the genius they display, and the spirit of poetry which breathes through all their extravagance. That imitation of our older writers, and especially of our older dramatists, to which we cannot help flattering ourselves that we have somewhat contributed, has brought on, as it were, a second spring in our poetry: — and few of its blossoms are either more profuse of sweetness or richer in promise, than this which is now before us. Mr. Keats, we understand, is still a very young man; and his whole works, indeed, bear evidence enough of the fact. They are full of extravagance and irregularity, rash attempts at originality, interminable wanderings, and excessive obscurity. They manifestly require, therefore, all the indulgence that can be claimed for a first attempt: — but we think it no less plain that they deserve it; for they are flushed all over with the rich lights of fancy, and so coloured and bestrewn with the flowers of poetry, that even while perplexed and bewildered in their labyrinths, it is impossible to resist the intoxication of their sweetness, or to shut our hearts to the enchantments they so lavishly present. The models upon which he has formed himself, in the *Endymion*, the earliest and by much the most considerable of his poems, are obviously the *Faithful Shepherdess* of Fletcher, and the *Sad Shepherd* of Ben Jonson; — the exquisite metres and inspired diction of which he has copied with great boldness and fidelity — and, like his great originals, has also contrived to impart to the whole piece that true rural and poetical air which breathes only in them and in *Theocritus* — which is at once homely and majestic, luxurious and rude, and sets before us the genuine sights and sounds and smells of the country, with all the magic and grace of *Elysium*. His subject has the disadvantage of being mythological; and in this respect, as well as on account of the raised and rapturous tone it consequently assumes, his poetry may be better compared perhaps to the *Comus* and the *Arcades* of Milton, of which, also, there are many traces of imitation. The great distinction, however, between him and these divine authors, is, that imagination in them is subordinate to reason and

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judgment, while, with him, it is paramount and supreme — that their ornaments and images are employed to embellish and recommend just sentiments, engaging incidents, and natural characters, while his are poured out without measure or restraint, and with no apparent design but to unburden the breast of the author, and give vent to the overflowing vein of his fancy. The thin and scanty tissue of his story is merely the light frame work on which his florid wreaths are suspended; and while his imaginations go rambling and entangling themselves everywhere, like wild honey-suckles, all idea of sober reason, and plan, and consistency, is utterly forgotten, and are ‘strangled in their waste fertility.’ A great part of the work indeed, is written in the strangest and most fantastical manner that can be imagined. It seems as if the author had ventured everything that occurred to him in the shape of a glittering image or striking expression — taken the first word that presented itself to make up a rhyme, and then made that word the germ of a new cluster of images — a hint for a new excursion of the fancy — and so wandered on, equally forgetful whence he came, and heedless whither he was going, till he had covered his pages with an interminable arabesque of connected and incongruous figures, that multiplied as they extended, and were only harmonized by the brightness of their tints, and the graces of their forms. In this rash and headlong career he has of course many lapses and failures. There is no work, accordingly, from which a malicious critic could cull more matter for ridicule, or select more obscure, unnatural, or absurd passages. But we do not take *that* to be our office: — and just beg leave, on the contrary, to say, that any one who, on this account, would represent the whole poem as despicable, must either have no notion of poetry, or no regard to truth.

It is, in truth, at least as full of genius as of absurdity; and he who does not find a great deal in it to admire and to give delight, cannot in his heart see much beauty in the two exquisite dramas to which we have already alluded, or find any great pleasure in some of the finest creations of Milton and Shakespeare. There are very many such persons, we verily believe, even among the reading and judicious part of the community — correct scholars we have no doubt many of them, and, it may be, very classical composers in prose and in verse — but utterly ignorant of the true genius of English poetry, and incapable of estimating its appropriate and most exquisite beauties. With that spirit we have no hesitation in saying that Mr. K. is deeply imbued — and of those beauties he has presented us with many striking examples. We are very much inclined indeed to add, that we do not know any book which we would sooner employ as a test to ascertain whether any one had in him a native relish for poetry, and a genuine sensibility to its intrinsic charm. The greater and more



distinguished poets of our country have so much else in them to gratify other tastes and propensities, that they are pretty sure to captivate and amuse those to whom their poetry is but an hindrance and obstruction, as well as those to whom it constitutes their chief attraction. The interest of the stories they tell—the vivacity of the characters they delineate—the weight and force of the maxims and sentiments in which they abound—the very pathos and wit and humour they display, which may all and each of them exist apart from their poetry and independent of it, are quite sufficient to account for their popularity, without referring much to that still higher gift, by which they subdue to their enchantments those whose souls are attuned to the finer impulses of poetry. It is only where those other recommendations are wanting, or exist in a weaker degree, that the true force of the attraction, exercised by the pure poetry with which they are so often combined, can be fairly appreciated—where, without much incident or many characters, and with little wit, wisdom, or arrangement, a number of bright pictures are presented to the imagination, and a fine feeling expressed of those mysterious relations by which visible external things are assimilated with inward thoughts and emotions, and become the images and exponents of all passions and affections. To an unpoetical reader such passages always appear mere raving and absurdity—and to this censure a very great part of the volume before us will certainly be exposed, with this class of readers. Even in the judgment of a fitter audience, however, it must, we fear, be admitted, that, besides the riot and extravagance of his fancy, the scope and substance of Mr. K.'s poetry is rather too dreary and abstracted to excite the strongest interest, or to sustain the attention through a work of any great compass or extent. He deals too much with shadowy and incomprehensible beings, and is too constantly rapt into an extramundane Elysium, to command a lasting interest with ordinary mortals—and must employ the agency of more varied and coarser emotions, if he wishes to take rank with the seducing poets of this or of former generations. There is something very curious too, we think, in the way in which he, and Mr. Barry Cornwall also, have dealt with the Pagan mythology, of which they have made so much use in their poetry. Instead of presenting its imaginary persons under the trite and vulgar traits that belong to them in the ordinary systems, little more is borrowed from these than the general conception of their conditions and relations; and an original character and distinct individuality is bestowed upon them, which has all the merit of invention, and all the grace and attraction of the fictions on which it is engrafted. The antients, though they probably did not stand in any great awe of their deities, have yet abstained very much from any

minute or dramatic representation of their feelings and affections. In Hesiod and Homer, they are coarsely delineated by some of their actions and adventures, and introduced to us merely as the agents in those particular transactions; while in the Hymns, from those ascribed to Orpheus and Homer, down to those of Callimachus, we have little but pompous epithets and invocations, with a flattering commemoration of their most famous exploits — and are never allowed to enter into their bosoms, or follow out the train of their feelings, with the presumption of our human sympathy. Except the love-song of the Cyclops to his Sea Nymph in Theocritus — the Lamentation of Venus for Adonis in Moschus — and the more recent Legend of Apuleius, we scarcely recollect a passage in all the writings of antiquity in which the passions of an immortal are fairly disclosed to the scrutiny and observation of men. The author before us, however, and some of his contemporaries, have dealt differently with the subject; — and, sheltering the violence of the fiction under the ancient traditional fable, have created and imagined an entire new set of characters, and brought closely and minutely before us the loves and sorrows and perplexities of beings, with whose names and supernatural attributes we had long been familiar, without any sense or feeling of their personal character. We have more than doubts of the fitness of such personages to maintain a permanent interest with the modern public; — but the way in which they are here managed, certainly gives them the best chance that now remains for them; and, at all events, it cannot be denied that the effect is striking and graceful. But we must now proceed to our extracts.

The first of the volumes before us is occupied with the loves of Endymion and Diana — which it would not be very easy, and which we do not at all intend to analyze in detail. In the beginning of the poem, however, the Shepherd Prince is represented as having had strange visions and delirious interviews with an unknown and celestial beauty; soon after which, he is called on to preside at a festival in honour of Pan; and his appearance in the procession is thus described.

His youth was fully blown,  
 Showing like Ganymede to manhood grown;  
 And, for those simple times, his garments were  
 A chieftain king's: beneath his breast, half-bare,  
 Was hung a silver bugle, and between  
 His nervy knees there lay a boar-spear keen.  
 A smile was on his countenance; he seem'd,  
 To common lookers on, like one who dream'd  
 Of idleness in groves Elysian:  
 But there were some who feelingly could scan

A lurking trouble in his nether lip,  
And see that oftentimes the reins would slip  
Through his forgotten hands. pp. 11, 12.

There is then a choral hymn addressed to the sylvan deity, which appears to us to be full of beauty; and reminds us, in many places, of the finest strains of Sicilian or English poetry. A part of it is as follows.

O THOU, whose mighty palāce roof doth hang &c.<sup>1</sup>

The enamoured youth sinks into insensibility in the midst of the solemnity, and is borne apart and revived by the care of his sister; and, opening his heavy eyes in her arms, says —

I feel this thine endearing love  
All through my bosom: thou art as a dove  
Trembling its closed eyes and sleeked wings  
About me; and the pearliest dew not brings  
Such morning incense from the fields of May,  
As do those brighter drops that twinkling stray  
From those kind eyes. Then think not thou  
That, any longer, I will pass my days  
Alone and sad.<sup>2</sup>

He then tells her all the story of his love and madness; and is afterwards led away by butterflies to the haunts of Naiads, and by them sent down into enchanted caverns, where he sees Venus and Adonis, and great flights of Cupids, and wanders over diamond terraces among beautiful fountains and temples and statues, and all sorts of fine and strange things. All this is very fantastical: But there are splendid pieces of description, and a sort of wild richness on the whole. We cull a few little morsels. This is the picture of the sleeping Adonis.

In midst of all, there lay a sleeping youth  
Of fondest beauty. Sideway his face repos'd  
On one white arm, and tenderly unclos'd,  
By tenderest pressure, a faint damask mouth, &c.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The extract given here consists of lines 232 to 241 and 247 to 286 of Book I. See pages 79 to 81.

<sup>2</sup> The quotation is given in full thus far as an example of the kind of thing that a "friendly critic" permitted himself in 1820. It will be seen that the text is entirely altered after the word *eyes*. The quotation extended twenty lines further, ending with *So mournful strange* in line 497 of Book I. See pages 88 and 89.

<sup>3</sup> Compare this also with the original at pages 123 and 124. The quotation goes on nine lines further, ending with line 414, Book II; and then comes the passage from *Hard by* (line 418) to the end of line 427 (page 125).

There is another and more classical sketch of Cybele.<sup>1</sup>

In the midst of all these spectacles, he has, we do not very well know how, a ravishing interview with his unknown goddess; and, when she melts away from him, he finds himself in a vast grotto, where he overhears the courtship of Alpheus and Arethusa, and, as they elope together, discovers that the grotto has disappeared, and that he is at the bottom of the sea, under the transparent arches of its naked waters. The following is abundantly extravagant; but comes of no ignoble lineage, nor shames its high descent.

Far had he roam'd,  
With nothing save the hollow vast, that foam'd  
Above, around, and at his feet; save things  
More dead than Morpheus' imaginings: &c.<sup>2</sup>

There he finds antient Glaucus enchanted by Circe — hears his wild story — and goes with him to the deliverance and restoration of thousands of drowned lovers, whose bodies were piled and stowed away in a large submarine palace. When this feat is happily performed, he finds himself again on dry ground, with woods and waters around him; and cannot help falling desperately in love with a beautiful damsel whom he finds there pining for some such consolations, and who tells a long story of her having come from India in the train of Bacchus, and having strayed away from him into that forest: — so they vow eternal fidelity, and are wafted up to heaven on flying horses, on which they sleep and dream among the stars; — and then the lady melts away, and he is again alone upon the earth; but soon rejoins his Indian love, and agrees to give up his goddess, and live only for her: But she refuses, and says she is resolved to devote herself to the service of Diana; and when she goes to dedicate herself, she turns out to be the goddess in a new shape, and exalts her lover with her to a blest immortality.

We have left ourselves room to say but little of the second volume, which is of a more miscellaneous character. Lamia is a Greek antique story, in the measure and taste of Endymion. Isabella is a paraphrase of the same tale of Boccacio, which Mr. Cornwall has also imitated under the title of 'a Sicilian Story.' It would be worth while to compare the two imitations; but we have no longer time for such a task. Mr. K. has followed his original more closely, and has given a deep pathos to several of his stanzas. The widowed bride's discovery of the murdered body is very strikingly given.

<sup>1</sup> Lines 639 to 649 (pages 132 and 133) are here quoted.

<sup>2</sup> This is duly followed by the fourteen descriptive lines that follow it in the text down to *monster*. See page 152.

Soon she turn'd up a soiled glove, whereon  
 Her silk had play'd in purple phantasies,  
 She kiss'd it with a lip more chill than stone,  
 And put it in her bosom, where it dries.  
 Then 'gan she work again ; nor stay'd her care,  
 But to throw back at times her veiling hair.

That old nurse stood beside her wondering,  
 Until her heart felt pity to the core  
 At sight of such a dismal labouring,  
 And so she kneeled, with her locks all hoar,  
 And put her lean hands to the horrid thing :  
 Three hours they labour'd at this travail sore ;  
 At last they felt the kernel of the grave, &c.<sup>1</sup>

The following lines from an ode to a Nightingale, are equally distinguished for harmony and feeling.

O for a beaker full of the warm South,  
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,  
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,  
 And purple-stained mouth ;  
 That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,  
 And with thee fade away into the forest dim :  
 Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget  
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,  
 The weariness, the fever, and the fret  
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan ;  
 Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last grey hairs,  
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies ;  
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow  
 And leaden-eyed despairs.  
 The voice I hear this passing night was heard  
 In ancient days by emperor and clown :  
 Perhaps the self-same song that found a path  
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,  
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn ;  
 The same that oft-times hath  
 Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam  
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> I retain thus much of the extract as a fine example of the art of quoting murderously with the best intentions. Stanzas LI and LII were also given her.

<sup>2</sup> It is to be observed that, wishing to give no more of stanza 3 after the eighth line, the reviewer places a full-stop instead of a comma at *despairs*, and calmly passes on to the third line of stanza 7 without any indication of a break.

HUNT'S REVIEW OF LAMIA, ISABELLA, ETC. 617

We must close our extracts with the following lively lines to Fancy.

O sweet Fancy! let her loose; &c.<sup>1</sup>

There is a fragment of a projected Epic, entitled 'Hyperion,' on the expulsion of Saturn and the Titanian deities by Jupiter and his younger adherents, of which we cannot advise the completion: For, though there are passages of some force and grandeur, it is sufficiently obvious, from the specimen before us, that the subject is too far removed from all the sources of human interest, to be successfully treated by any modern author. Mr. Keats has unquestionably a very beautiful imagination, and a great familiarity with the finest diction of English poetry; but he must learn not to misuse or misapply these advantages; and neither to waste the good gifts of nature and study on intractable themes, nor to luxuriate too recklessly on such as are more suitable.

VII.

THE STORIES OF LAMIA, THE POT OF BASIL, THE EVE OF ST. AGNES, &c., AS TOLD BY MR. KEATS.

A REVIEW BY LEIGH HUNT.<sup>2</sup>

*Published in "The Indicator" for the 2nd and 9th of August 1820.*

IN laying before our readers an account of another new publication, it is fortunate that the nature of the work again falls in with the character of our miscellany; part of the object of which is to relate the stories of old times. We shall therefore abridge into prose the stories which Mr. Keats has told in poetry, only making up for it, as we go, by cutting some of the richest passages out of his verse, and fitting them in to our plainer narrative. They are such as would leaven a much greater lump. Their drops are rich and vital, the essence of a heap of fertile thoughts.

The first story, entitled Lamia, was suggested to our author by a passage in Burton's Anatomy of Melancholy, which he has extracted at the end of it. We will extract it here, at the beginning, that the readers may see how he has enriched it. Burton's relation is itself an improvement on the account in Philostratus. The old book-fighter

<sup>1</sup> The lines quoted are 9 to 24 and 39 to 66.

<sup>2</sup> After his second paragraph Hunt extracts the quotation from Burton given at page 242.

with melancholy thoughts is speaking of the seductions of phantasmata.

According to our poet, Mercury had come down from heaven, one day, in order to make love to a nymph, famous for her beauty. He could not find her; and he was halting among the woods uneasily, when he heard a lonely voice, complaining. It was

A mournful voice,  
Such as once heard, in gentle heart, destroys  
All pain but pity: thus the lone voice spake.  
“When from this wreathed tomb shall I awake!  
“When move in a sweet body fit for life,  
“And love, and pleasure, and the ruddy strife  
“Of hearts and lips! Ah, miserable me!”

Mercury went looking about among the trees and grass,

Until he found a palpitating snake,  
Bright, and cirque-couchant in a dusky brake.

The admiration, pity, and horror, to be excited by humanity in a brute shape, were never perhaps called upon by a greater mixture of beauty and deformity than in the picture of this creature. Our pity and suspicions are begged by the first word: the profuse and vital beauties with which she is covered seem proportioned to her misery and natural rights; and lest we should lose sight of them in this gorgeousness, the “woman’s mouth” fills us at once with shuddering and compassion.

She was a gordian shape of dazzling hue,  
Vermillion-spotted, golden, green, and blue; &c.<sup>1</sup>

The serpent tells Mercury that she knows upon what quest he is bound, and asks him if he has succeeded. The god, with the usual eagerness of his species to have his will, falls into the trap; and tells her that he will put her in possession of any wish she may have at heart, provided she can tell him where to find his nymph. A-eagerly, she accepts his promise, making him ratify it by an oath, which he first pronounces with an earnest lightness, and afterwards with a deeper solemnity.

Then once again the charmed God began  
An oath, and through the serpent’s ears it ran  
Warm, tremulous, devout, psalterian.

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<sup>1</sup> Hunt continues his quotation down to the end of line 63 (see page 222).

*HUNT'S REVIEW OF LAMIA, ISABELLA, ETC. 619*

The creature tells him that it was she who had rendered the nymph invisible, in order to preserve her from the importunities of the ruder wood gods. She adds, that she was a woman herself, that she loves a youth of Ccrinth and wishes to be a woman again, and that if he will let her breathe upon his eyes, he shall see his invisible beauty. The god sees, loves, and prevails. The serpent undergoes a fierce and convulsive change, and flies towards Corinth,

A full-born beauty, new and exquisite.

Lamia, whose liability to painful metamorphosis was relieved by a supernatural imagination, had been attracted by the beauty of Lycius, while pitching her mind among the enjoyments of Corinth. By the same process, she knew that he was to pass along, that evening, on the road from the sea-side to Corinth; and there accordingly she contrives to have an interview, which ends in his being smitten with love, and conducting her to her pretended home in that city. She represents herself as a rich orphan, living "but half-retired," and affects to wonder that he never saw her before. As they enter Corinth, they pass the philosopher Apollonius, who is Lycius's tutor, and from whom he instinctively conceals his face. Lamia's hand shudders in that of her lover; but she says she is only wearied; and at the same moment, they stop at the entrance of a magnificent house: —

A pillar'd porch, with lofty portal'd door,  
Where hung a silver lamp, whose phosphor glow  
Reflected in the slabbed steps below,  
Mild as a star in water.

Here they lived for some time, undisturbed by the world, in all the delight of a mutual passion. The house remained invisible to all eyes, but those of Lycius. There were a few Persian mutes, "seen that year about the markets;" and nobody knew whence they came; but the most inquisitive were baffled in endeavouring to track them to some place of abode.

But all this while, a god was every night in the house, taking offence. Every night

With a terrific glare,  
Love, jealous grown of so complete a pair,  
Hovered and buzzed his wings with fearful roar  
Above the lintel of their chamber door,  
And down the passage cast a glow upon the floor.

Lycius, to the great distress of his mistress, who saw in his vanity a



great danger, persuaded her to have a public wedding-feast. She only begged him not to invite Apollonius; and then, resolving to dress up her bridals with a sort of despairing magnificence, equal to her apprehensions of danger, she worked a fairy architecture in secret, served only with the noise of wings and a restless sound of music —

A haunting music, sole perhaps and lone  
 Supportress of the faery-roof, made moan  
 Throughout, as fearful the whole charm might fade.

This is the very quintessence of the romantic. The walls of the long vaulted room were covered with palms and plantain-trees imitated in cedar-wood, and meeting over head in the middle of the ceiling; between the stems were jasper pannels, from which "there burst forth creeping imagery of slighter trees;" and before each of these "lucid pannels"

Fuming stood

A censer filled with myrrh and spiced wood, &c.<sup>1</sup>

Twelve tables stood in this room, set round with circular couches, and on every table was a noble feast and the statue of a god.

The guests came. They wondered and talked; but their gossiping would have ended well enough, when the wine prevailed, had not Apollonius, an unbidden guest, come with them. He sat right opposite the lovers, and

— Fixed his eye, without a twinkle or stir  
 Full on the alarmed beauty of the bride,  
 Brow-beating her fair form, and troubling her sweet pride.

Lycius felt her hand grow alternately hot and cold, and wondered more and more both at her agitation and the conduct of his old tutor. He looked into her eyes, but they looked nothing in return: he spoke to her, but she made no answer: by degrees the music ceased, the flowers faded away, the pleasure all darkened, and

A deadly silence step by step increased,  
 Until it seemed a horrid presence there,  
 And not a man but felt the terror in his hair.

The bridegroom at last shrieked out her name; but it was only echoed back to him by the room. Lamia sat fixed, her face of a

<sup>1</sup> Hunt adds here lines 178 to 182 (see page 226); and, after the words *statue of a god*, he quotes lines 133 to 137 and 142 to 145.

deadly white. He called in mixed agony and rage to the philosopher to take off his eyes; but Apollonius, refusing, asked him whether his old guide and instructor who had preserved him from all harm to that day, ought to see him made the prey of a serpent. A mortal faintness came into the breath of Lamia at this word; she motioned him, as well as she could, to be silent; but looking her stedfastly in the face, he repeated Serpent! and she vanished with a horrible scream. Upon the same night, died Lycius, and was swathed for the funeral in his wedding-garments.

Mr. Keats has departed as much from common-place in the character and moral of this story, as he has in the poetry of it. He would see fair play to the serpent, and makes the power of the philosopher an ill-natured and disturbing thing. Lamia though liable to be turned into painful shapes had a soul of humanity; and the poet does not see why she should not have her pleasures accordingly, merely because a philosopher saw that she was not a mathematical truth. This is fine and good. It is vindicating the greater philosophy of poetry. At the same time, we wish that for the purpose of his story he had not appeared to give into the common-place of supposing that Apollonius's sophistry must always prevail, and that modern experiment has done a deadly thing to poetry by discovering the nature of the rainbow, the air, &c.: that is to say, that the knowledge of natural history and physics, by shewing us the nature of things, does away the imaginations that once adorned them. This is a condescension to a learned vulgarism, which so excellent a poet as Mr. Keats ought not to have made. The world will always have fine poetry, so long as it has events, passions, affections, and a philosophy that sees deeper than this philosophy. There will be a poetry of the heart, as long as there are tears and smiles: there will be a poetry of the imagination, as long as the first causes of things remain a mystery. A man who is no poet, may think he is none, as soon as he finds out the physical cause of the rainbow; but he need not alarm himself:—he was none before. The true poet will go deeper. He will ask himself what is the cause of that physical cause; whether truths to the senses are after all to be taken as truths to the imagination; and whether there is not room and mystery enough in the universe for the creation of infinite things, when the poor matter-of-fact philosopher has come to the end of his own vision. It is remarkable that an age of poetry has grown up with the progress of experiment; and that the very poets, who seem to countenance these notions, accompany them by some of their finest effusions. Even if there were nothing new to be created,—if philosophy, with its line and rule, could even score the ground, and say to poetry “Thou shalt go no further,” she would look back to the old world, and still find it inexhaustible. The crops

from its fertility are endless. But these alarms are altogether idle. The essence of poetical enjoyment does not consist in belief, but in a voluntary power to imagine.

The next story, that of the Pot of Basil, is from Boccaccio. After the narrative of that great writer, we must make as short work of it as possible in prose. To turn one of his stories into verse, is another thing. It is like setting it to a more elaborate music. Mr. Keats is so struck with admiration of his author, that even while giving him this accompaniment, he breaks out into an apology to the great Italian, asking pardon for this

— Echo of him in the north-wind sung.

We might waive a repetition of the narrative altogether, as the public have lately been familiarized with it in the *Sicilian Story* of Mr. Barry Cornwall:<sup>1</sup> but we cannot help calling to mind that the hero and heroine were two young and happy lovers, who kept their love a secret from her rich brothers; that her brothers, getting knowledge of their intercourse, lured him into a solitary place, and murdered him: that Isabella, informed of it by a dreary vision of her lover, found out where he was buried, and with the assistance of her nurse, severed the head from the body that she might cherish even that ghastly memorial of him as a relic never to be parted with; that she buried the head in a pot of earth, and planting basil over it, watered the leaves with her continual tears till they grew into wonderful beauty and luxuriance; that her brothers, prying into her fondness for the Pot of Basil, which she carried with her from place to place, contrived to steal it away; that she made such lamentations for it, as induced them to wonder what could be its value, upon which they dug into it, and discovered the head; that the amazement of that discovery struck back upon their hearts, so that after burying the head secretly, they left their native place, and went to live in another city; and that Isabel continued to cry and moan for her Pot of Basil, which she had not the power to cease wishing for; till, under the pressure of that weeping want, she died.

Our author can pass to the most striking imaginations from the most delicate and fairy fancy. He says of the lovers in their happiness,

Parting they seemed to tread upon the air,  
Twin roses by the zephyrs blown apart

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<sup>1</sup> *Tempora mutantur!* In 1820 Hunt appeals to Procter's *Sicilian Story* to stand him in stead for the tale of Isabella. Now the book containing that and other verses by Bryan Waller Procter may perhaps be sought by a few students as a venerable curiosity, interesting for purposes of comparison with Keats's *Pot of Basil*, but scarcely for its own sake as an example how to tell the public that supreme story.

Only to meet again more close, and share  
The inward fragrance of each other's heart.

These pictures of their intercourse terribly aggravate the gloom of what follows. Lorenzo, when lured away to be killed, is taken unknowingly out of his joys, like a lamb out of the pasture. The following masterly anticipation of his end, conveyed in a single word, has been justly admired: —

So the two brothers and their *murder'd* man  
Rode past fair Florence, to where Arno's stream  
Gurgles through straitened banks.  
They passed the water  
Into a forest quiet for the slaughter.

When Mr. Keats errs in his poetry, it is from the ill management of a good thing, — exuberance of ideas. Once or twice, he does so in a taste positively bad, like Marino or Cowley, as in a line in his Ode to Psyche

At tender eye-dawn of aureorean love;

but it is once or twice only, in his present volume. Nor has he erred much in it in a nobler way. What we allude to is one or two passages in which he over-informs the occasion or the speaker; as where the brothers, for instance, whom he describes as a couple of mere “money-bags,” are gifted with the power of uttering the following exquisite metaphor: —

“To day we purpose, ay, this hour we mount  
To spur three leagues towards the Apennine:  
Come down, we pray thee, ere the hot sun count  
His dewy rosary on the eglantine.”

But to return to the core of the story. — Observe the fervid misery of the following.<sup>1</sup>

It is curious to see how the simple pathos of Boccaccio, or (which is the same thing) the simple intensity of the heroine's feelings, suffices our author more and more, as he gets to the end of his story. And he has related it as happily, as if he had never written any poetry but that of the heart. The passage about the tone of her voice, —

<sup>1</sup> The expression *the core of the story*, not altogether a commonplace phrase, is to be found in Shelley's paper on *Mandeville*, which had appeared in *The Examiner* for the 28th of December 1817. Hunt quotes at this point stanzas XLVI to XLVIII.

the poor lost-witted coaxing, — the “chuckle,” in which she asks after her Pilgrim and her Basil, — is as true and touching an instance of the effect of a happy familiar word, as any in all poetry. The poet bids his imagination depart,

For Isabel, sweet Isabel, will die,  
Will die a death too lone and incomplete,  
Now they have ta'en away her Basil sweet.<sup>1</sup>

The Eve of St. Agnes, which is rather a picture than a story, may be analysed in a few words. It is an account of a young beauty, who going to bed on the eve in question to dream of her lover, while her rich kinsmen, the opposers of his love, are keeping holiday in the rest of the house, finds herself waked by him in the night, and in the hurry of the moment agrees to elope with him. The portrait of the heroine, preparing to go to bed, is remarkable for its union of extreme richness and good taste; not that those two properties of description are naturally distinct; but that they are too often separated by very good poets, and that the passage affords a striking specimen of the sudden and strong maturity of the author's genius. When he wrote Endymion he could not have resisted doing too much. To the description before us, it would be a great injury either to add or diminish. It falls at once gorgeously and delicately upon us, like the colours of the painted glass. Nor is Madeline hurt by all her encrusting jewelry and rustling silks. Her gentle, unsophisticated heart is in the midst, and turns them into so many ministrants to her loveliness.<sup>2</sup>

As a specimen of the Poems, which are all lyrical, we must indulge ourselves in quoting entire the Ode to a Nightingale. There is that mixture in it of real melancholy and imaginative relief, which poetry alone presents us in her “charmed cup,” and which some over-rational critics have undertaken to find wrong because it is not true. It does not follow that what is not true to them, is not true to others. If the relief is real, the mixture is good and sufficing. A poet finds refreshment in his imaginary wine, as other men do in their real; nor have we the least doubt, that Milton found his grief for the loss of his friend King, more solaced by the allegorical recollections of Lycidas, (which were exercises of his mind, and recollections of a friend who would have admired them) than if he could have anticipated Dr. Johnson's

<sup>1</sup> Hunt goes on to quote stanzas LXII and LXIII. In regard to the seeming misunderstanding about the pilgrim, see note at page 262.

<sup>2</sup> The stanzas here given in illustration are XXIV to XXVII; and Hunt merely adds “Is not this perfectly beautiful? [Want of room compels us to break off here. We cannot leave the reader at a better place. The remainder of the criticism must occupy the beginning of our next number.]” It occupied the whole, as it had of that number, being decorated with very large extracts.

objections, and mourned in nothing but broadcloth and matter of fact. He yearned after the poetical as well as social part of his friend's nature; and had as much right to fancy it straying in the wilds and oceans of romance, where it had strayed, as in the avenues of Christ's College where his body had walked. In the same spirit the imagination of Mr. Keats betakes itself, like the wind, "where it listeth," and is as truly there, as if his feet could follow it. The poem will be the more striking to the reader, when he understands what we take a friend's liberty in telling him, that the author's powerful mind has for some time past been inhabiting a sickened and shaken body, and that in the mean while it has had to contend with feelings that make a fine nature ache for its species, even when it would disdain to do so for itself; — we mean, critical malignity, — that unhappy envy, which would wreak its own tortures upon others, especially upon those that really feel for it already.<sup>1</sup>

The Hyperion is a fragment, — a gigantic one, like a ruin in the desert, or the bones of the mastodon. It is truly of a piece with its subject, which is the downfall of the elder gods. It opens with Saturn, dethroned, sitting in a deep and solitary valley, benumbed in spite of his huge powers with the amazement of the change.<sup>2</sup>

By degrees, the Titans meet in one spot, to consult how they may regain their lost empire; but Clymene the gentlest, and Oceanus the most reflective of those earlier deities, tell them it is irrecoverable. A very grand and deep-thoughted cause is assigned for this by the latter. Intellect, he gives them to understand, was inevitably displacing a more brute power.<sup>3</sup>

The more imaginative parts of the poem are worthy of this sublime moral. Hyperion, the God of the Sun, is the last to give way; but horror begins to visit his old beatitude with new and dread sensations. The living beauty of his palace, whose portals open like a rose, the awful phenomena that announce a change in heaven, and his inability to bid the day break as he was accustomed, — all this part, in short, which is the core and inner diamond of the poem, we must enjoy with the reader.<sup>4</sup>

The other Titans, lying half lifeless in their valley of despair, are happily compared to

A dismal cirque  
Of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor,

<sup>1</sup> This passage (followed by the entire *Ode to a Nightingale*) must not be forgotten in considering the effect of *The Quarterly Review* article upon Keats. Hunt was intimate enough with Keats to know very well what he was talking about.

<sup>2</sup> This paragraph is followed by the first 41 lines of *Hyperion*.

<sup>3</sup> Here Hunt quotes from *Great Saturn, thou*, in line 182 of Book II, to line 190, and from line 202 to *Darkness* in line 215.

<sup>4</sup> The passage here quoted is from *His palace bright* in line 176 of Book I to line 304.

When the chill rain begins at shut of eve,  
 In dull November, and their chancel vault,  
 The Heaven itself, is blinded throughout night.

The fragment ends with the deification of Apollo. It strikes us that there is something too effeminate and human in the way in which Apollo receives the exaltation which his wisdom is giving him. He weeps and wonders somewhat too fondly; but his powers gather nobly on him as he proceeds. He exclaims to Mnemosyne, the Goddess of Memory,

Knowledge enormous makes a God of me,  
 Names, deeds, gray legends, dire events, rebellions,  
 Majesties, sovran voices, agonies,  
 Creations and destroyings, all at once  
 Pour into the wide hollows of my brain,  
 And deify me, as if some blithe wine  
 Or bright elixir peerless I had drunk,  
 And so become immortal.

After this speech, he is seized with a glow of aspiration, and an intensity of pain, proportioned to the causes that are changing him: Mnemosyne upholds her arms, as one who prophesied; and

At length  
 Apollo shrieked; — and lo! from all his limbs  
 Celestial \* \* \* \* \*

Here the poem ceases, to the great impatience of the poetical reader.

If any living poet could finish this fragment, we believe it is the author himself. But perhaps he feels that he ought not. A story which involves passion, almost of necessity involves speech; and though we may well enough describe beings greater than ourselves by comparison, unfortunately we cannot make them speak by comparison. Mr. Keats, when he first introduces Thea consoling Saturn, says that she spoke

Some mourning words, which in our feeble tongue  
 Would come in these like accents; O how frail  
 To that large utterance of the early Gods!

This grand confession of want of grandeur is all that he could do for them. Milton could do no more. Nay, he did less, when according to Pope he made

God the father turn a school divine.

The moment the Gods speak, we forget that they did not speak like ourselves. The fact is, they feel like ourselves; and the poet would have to make them feel otherwise, even if he could make them speak otherwise, which he cannot, unless he venture upon an obscurity which would destroy our sympathy: and what is sympathy with a God, but turning him into a man? We allow, that superiority and inferiority are, after all, human terms, and imply something not so truly fine and noble as the levelling of a great sympathy and love; but poems of the present nature, like *Paradise Lost*, assume a different principle; and fortunately perhaps, it is one which it is impossible to reconcile with the other.

We have now to conclude the surprise of the reader, who has seen what solid stuff these poems are made of, with informing him of what the book has not mentioned, — that they were almost all written four years ago, when the author was but twenty.<sup>1</sup> Ay, indeed! cries a critic, rubbing his hands delighted (if indeed even criticism can do so, any longer); “then that accounts for the lines you speak of, written in the taste of Marino.” — It does so; but, sage Sir, after settling the merits of those one or two lines you speak of, what accounts, pray, for a small matter which you leave unnoticed, namely, all the rest? — The truth is, we rather mention this circumstance as a matter of ordinary curiosity, than any thing else; for great faculties have great privileges, and leap over time as well as other obstacles. Time itself, and its contents, are things yet to be discovered. There is no knowing even how much duration one man may crowd into a few years, while others drag out their slender lines.<sup>2</sup> There are circular roads full of hurry and scenery, and straight roads full of listlessness and barrenness; and travellers may arrive by both, at the same hour. The Miltons, who begin intellectually old, and still intellectual, end physically old, are indeed Methusalems; and may such be our author, their son.

Mr. Keats's versification sometimes reminds us of Milton in his blank verse, and sometimes of Chapman both in his blank verse and rhyme; but his faculties, essentially speaking, though partaking of the unearthly aspirations and abstract yearnings of both these poets, are altogether his own. They are ambitious, but less directly so. They are more social, and in the finer sense of the word, sensual, than either. They are more coloured by the modern philosophy of sympathy and natural justice. Endymion, with all its extraordinary powers, partook of the faults of youth, though the best ones; but the reader of *Hyperion* and these other stories would never guess that they were written at twenty. The author's versification is now perfected,

<sup>1</sup> This is a mistake, as will be seen by all who have followed the notes to the various poems.

<sup>2</sup> [Query, lives?]



the exuberances of his imagination restrained, and a calm power, the surest and loftiest of all power, takes place of the impatient workings of the younger god within him. The character of his genius is that of energy and voluptuousness, each able at will to take leave of the other, and possessing, in their union, a high feeling of humanity not common to the best authors who can less combine them. Mr. Keats undoubtedly takes his seat with the oldest and best of our living poets.

We have carried our criticism to much greater length than we intended; but in truth, whatever the critics might think, it is a refreshment to us to get upon other people's thoughts, even though the rogues be our contemporaries. Oh! how little do those minds get out of themselves, and what fertile and heaven-breathing prospects do they lose, who think that a man must be confined to the mill-path of his own homestead, merely that he may avoid seeing the abundance of his neighbours! Above all, how little do they know of us eternal, weekly, and semi-weekly writers! We do not mean to say that it is not very pleasant to run upon a smooth road, seeing what we like, and talking what we like; but we do say, that it is pleasanter than all, when we are tired, to hear what we like, and to be lulled with congenial thoughts and higher music, till we are fresh to start again upon our journey. What we would not give to have a better Examiner and a better Indicator than our own twice every week, uttering our own thoughts in a finer manner, and altering the world faster and better than we can alter it! How we should like to read our present number, five times bettered; and to have nothing to do, for years and years, but to pace the green lanes, forget the tax-gatherer, and vent ourselves now and then in a verse.

### VIII.

#### LATER REMARKS ON KEATS BY LEIGH HUNT.\*

KEATS was born a poet of the most poetical kind. All his feelings came to him through a poetical medium, or were speedily coloured by it. He enjoyed a jest as heartily as any one, and sympathized with the lowliest commonplace; but the next minute his thoughts were in a garden of enchantment with nymphs, and fauns, and shapes of exalted humanity:

Elysian beauty, melancholy grace.

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\* In *Imagination and Fancy* (1844) Hunt gave as a selection from Keats's poetry *The Eve of St. Agnes*, some three pages of extracts from *Endymion* and *Hyperion*,

It might be said of him, that he never beheld an oak-tree without seeing the Dryad. His fame may now forgive the critics who disliked his politics, and did not understand his poetry. Repeated editions of him in England, France, and America attest its triumphant survival of all obloquy; and there can be no doubt that he has taken a permanent station among the British Poets, of a very high, if not thoroughly mature, description.

Keats's early poetry, indeed, partook plentifully of the exuberance of youth; and even in most of his later, his sensibility, sharpened by mortal illness, tended to a morbid excess. His region is "a wilderness of sweets," — flowers of all hue, and "weeds of glorious feature," — where, as he says, the luxuriant soil brings

The pipy hemlock to strange overgrowth.

But there also is the "rain-scented eglantine," and bushes of May-flowers, with bees, and myrtle, and bay, — and endless paths into forests haunted with the loveliest as well as gentlest beings; and the gods live in the distance, amid notes of majestic thunder. I do not say that no "surfeit" is ever there; but I do, that there is no end of the "nectared sweets." In what other English poet (however superior to him in other respects) are you so *certain* of never opening a page without lighting upon the loveliest imagery and the most eloquent expressions? Name one. Compare any succession of their pages at random, and see if the young poet is not sure to present his stock of beauty: crude it may be, in many instances; too indiscriminate in general; never, perhaps, thoroughly perfect in cultivation; but there it is, exquisite of its kind, and filling envy with despair. He died at five-and-twenty; he had not revised his earlier works, nor, given his genius its last pruning. His *Endymion* in resolving to be free from all critical trammels, had no versification; and his last noble fragment, *Hyperion*, is not faultless, — but it is nearly so. The *Eve of St. Agnes* betrays morbidity only in one instance (noticed in the comment). Even in his earliest productions, which are to be considered as those of youth just emerging from boyhood, are to be found passages of as masculine a beauty as ever were written. Witness the *Sonnet on reading Chapman's Homer*, — epical in the splendour and dignity of its images, and terminating with the noblest Greek simplicity. Among his finished productions, however, of any length, the *Eve of St. Agnes* still appears to me the most delightful and complete specimen of his genius. It stands mid-way between his most sensitive ones (which, though of rare beauty, occasionally sink into feebleness)

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the *Ode to a Nightingale*, and the *Sonnet on Chapman's Homer*; and these remarks form the proem to the selection.

and the less generally characteristic majesty of the fragment of *Hyperion*. Doubtless his greatest poetry is to be found in *Hyperion*; and had he lived, there is as little doubt he would have written chiefly in that strain; rising superior to those languishments of love which made the critics so angry, and which they might so easily have pardoned at his time of life. But the *Eve of St. Agnes* had already bid most of them adieu,—exquisitely loving as it is. It is young, but full-grown poetry of the rarest description; graceful as the beardless Apollo; glowing and gorgeous with the colours of romance. I have therefore reprinted the whole of it in the present volume, together with the comment alluded to in the Preface;<sup>1</sup> especially as, in addition to felicity of treatment, its subject is in every respect a happy one, and helps to “paint” this our bower of “poetry with delight.” Melancholy, it is true, will “break in” when the reader thinks of the early death of such a writer; but it is one of the benevolent provisions of nature, that all good things tend to pleasure in the recollection, when the bitterness of their loss is past, their own sweetness embalms them.

A thing of beauty is a joy for ever.

While writing this paragraph, a hand-organ out-of-doors has been playing one of the mournfullest and loveliest of the airs of Bellini—another genius who died young. The sound of music always gives a feeling either of triumph or tenderness to the state of mind in which it is heard; in this instance it seemed like one departed spirit come to bear testimony to another, and to say how true indeed may be the union of sorrowful and sweet recollections.

Keats knew the youthful faults of his poetry as well as any man, as the reader may see by the preface to *Endymion*, and its touching though manly acknowledgment of them to critical candour. I have this moment read it again, after a lapse of years, and have been astonished to think how any body could answer such an appeal to the mercy of strength, with the cruelty of weakness. All the good for which Mr. Gifford pretended to be zealous, he might have effected with pain to no one, and glory to himself; and therefore all the evil he mixed with it was of his own making. But the secret at the bottom of such unprovoked censure is exasperated inferiority. Young poets, upon the whole,—at least very young poets,—had better not publish at all. They are pretty sure to have faults; and jealousy and envy are as sure to find them out, and wreak upon them their own disappointments. The critic is often an unsuccessful author, almost always an inferior

<sup>1</sup> The comment is that given in this edition in the form of footnotes. The allusion in Hunt's Preface is to the original appearance of the comment in his *Lond. Journal*.

one to a man of genius, and possesses his sensibility neither to beauty nor to pain. If he does, — if by any chance he is a man of genius himself (and such things have been), sure and certain will be his regret, some day, for having given pains which he might have turned into noble pleasures; and nothing will console him but that very charity towards himself, the grace of which can only be secured to us by our having denied it to no one.<sup>1</sup>

Let the student of poetry observe, that in all the luxury of the *Eve of St. Agnes* there is nothing of the conventional craft of artificial writers; no heaping up of words or similes for their own sakes or the rhyme's sake; no gaudy common-places; no borrowed airs of earnestness; no tricks of inversion; no substitution of reading or of ingenious thoughts for feeling or spontaneity; no irrelevancy or unfitness of any sort. All flows out of sincerity and passion. The writer is as much in love with the heroine as his hero is; his description of the painted window, however gorgeous, has not an untrue or superfluous word; and the only speck of a fault in the whole poem arises from an excess of emotion.

## IX.

## BOCCACCIO'S STORY OF ISABELLA.

(*Il Decamerone, Giornata II, novella 5*)

DONE INTO ENGLISH

BY

JOHN PAYNE.

**THE ARGUMENT.**— Isabella's brothers slay her lover, who appears to her in a dream and shows her where he is buried; whereupon she privily disenters his head and sets it in a pot of basil. Thereover making moan a great while every day, her brothers take it from her and she for grief dies a little thereafterward.

**E**LIZA'S tale being ended and somedele commended of the King, Philomena was bidden to discourse, who, full of compassion for the wretched Gerbino and his mistress, after a piteous sigh, began thus — "My story, gracious ladies, will not treat of folk of so

<sup>1</sup> Allusion, of course, is not here made to *all* the critics of the time, but only to such reigning reviewers as took earliest and most frequent notice of Keats. The *Edinburgh Review*, though not quick to speak of him, did so before he died, with a fervour of eulogy at least equal to its objections; and I think I may add, that its then distinguished Editor (now a revered ornament of the Scottish bench) has since felt his admiration of the young poet increase, instead of diminish. [HUNT'S NOTE.]

high condition as were those of whom Eliza has told, yet peradventure it will be no less pitiful; and what brought me in mind of it was the mention, a little before, of Messina, where the case befell.

There were then in Messina three young brothers, merchants and left very rich by their father, who was a man of San Gimignano, and they had a sister, Isabella by name, a right fair and well-mannered maiden, whom, for whatever reason, they had not yet married. Now these brothers had in one of their warehouses a youth of Pisa, called Lorenzo, who did and ordered all their dealings and was very comely and agreeable of person, wherefore, Isabella being often in his company, it befell that he began strangely to please her; of which Lorenzo taking note, at one time and another, he in like manner, leaving his other loves, began to turn this thought to her; and so went on the affair, that each being alike pleasing to the other, it was no great while before, taking assurance, they wrought that which each of them most desired. Continuing on this wise and enjoying great pleasure and delight one with the other, they knew not how to deal so secretly but that, one night, Isabella, going whereas Lorenzo lay, was, unknown to herself, seen of the eldest of her brothers, who, being a prudent youth, for all the annoy it gave him to know this thing, being yet moved by more honourable counsel, abode without sign or word till the morning, revolving in himself various things in respect of the matter. The day being come, he told his brothers what he had seen the past night of Isabella and Lorenzo, and after long advisement with them, determined (so that neither to them nor to their sister should any reproach ensue) to pass the thing over in silence and feign to have seen and known nothing thereof, till such time as, without hurt or loss to themselves, they might avail to do away this shame from their honour, ere it go farther. In this mind abiding and devising and laughing with Lorenzo as was their wont, it came about that one day, feigning to go forth the city, all three, a'pleasuring, they carried him with them to a very lonely and remote place, and there, the occasion offering, slew him, whilst he was off his guard, and buried him whereas none should know of it; then, returning to Messina, they gave out that they had despatched him somewhither on some of their business, the which was the lightlier credited, that they were often used to send him abroad on their occasions. Lorenzo not coming back and Isabella often and instantly enquiring for him of her brothers, even as one to whom the long delay was grievous, it befell one day, as she was very urgently asking after him, that one of them said to her "What meaneth this? What hast thou to do with Lorenzo, that thou askest thus often of him? An thou enquire for him more, we will make thee such answer as thou deservest." Wherefore the girl, sad and grieving and fearful she knew not of what, abode without

more asking; yet many a time anights would she piteously call him and pray that he would come, and whiles with many tears she would make moan of his long tarrying; and thus, without a moment's gladness, she abode expecting him alway, till, one night, having thus much lamented Lorenzo for that he returned not and being at last fallen asleep weeping, he appeared to her in a dream, pale and all disordered, with clothes rent and mouldered, and her-seemed he bespoke her thus: "O Isabella, thou dost nought but call on me, grieving for my long delay and cruelly impeaching me with thy tears. Know therefore that I may never more return to thee, for that the last day thou sawest me, thy brothers slew me." Then having discovered to her the place where they had buried him, he charged her no more call him nor expect him and disappeared: whereupon she awoke and giving faith to the vision, wept bitterly. In the morning, being risen and daring not to say aught to her brothers, she determined to go to the place appointed, and see if the thing were true that had so appeared to her in the dream. Accordingly, having leave to go somedele abroad for her disport, she betook herself thither, with all convenient haste, in company of one who had been with her aforetime and was privy to all her doings, and there, clearing away the dead leaves from the place, she dug whereas the earth seemed the less hard. She had not dug long before she came upon her unhappy lover's body, yet nothing changed nor rotted, and thence knew manifestly that her vision was true, wherefore she was the most distressful of women; yet, knowing that this was no place for lament, she would fain, an she but might, have borne away the whole body, to give it fitter burial; but seeing that this might not be, she with a knife cut off the head, as best she could, and wrapping it in a napkin, laid it in her maid's lap. Then casting back the earth over the trunk, she departed thence, without being seen of any, and returned home, where, shutting herself up in her chamber with her lover's head, she bewept it so long and bitterly, that she bathed it all with her tears, and kissed it a thousand times in every part. Then, taking a great and goodly pot, of those wherein they plant marjoram or sweet basil, she laid therein the head, folded in a fair linen cloth, and covered it up with earth, in which she planted sundry heads of right fair basil of Salerno; nor did she ever water these with other water than that of her tears or rose or orange-flower water. Moreover she took wont to sit still near the pot and to gaze amorously upon it with all her desire, as at that which held her Lorenzo hid, and after she had a great while gazed upon it, she would bend over it and fall to weeping so sore and so long, that her tears bathed the basil, which, by dint of such long and assiduous tending, as well as by reason of the richness of the earth proceeding from the rotting head that was therein, grew passing fair and sweet of savour. The

girl, doing without cease after this wise, was many times seen of her neighbours, who to her brothers, wondering at her waste beauty and that her eyes seemed to have fled forth her head [for weeping], related this, saying " We have noted that she doth every day after such a fashion." The brothers, hearing and being certified of this and having once and again reprov'd her therefor, but without avail, let secretly carry away from her the pot, which she missing, with the utmost instance many a time required, and for that it was not restored to her, stinted not to weep and lament till she fell sick, nor in her sickness did she ask aught else but the pot of basil. The young men marvelled greatly at this continual asking and were minded therefore to see what was in this pot; so, emptying out the earth, they found the cloth and in this the head, not yet so rotted but that they might know it, by the curled hair, to be that of Lorenzo. At this they were mightily amazed, and feared lest the thing should get wind: wherefore burying the head again, without word said, they privily departed Messina, having made their dispositions to withdraw thence, and betook themselves to Naples. The girl, ceasing never from lamenting and still demanding her pot, died weeping; and so her ill-fortuned love had end. But after a while, the thing being grown manifest to many, there was one who made thereon the song that is yet sung and that runs thus:

Alack! ah, who could the ill Christian be,  
That stole my pot away? &c.

Philomena's story was right pleasing to the ladies, for that they had many a time heard sing this song, yet could never, by asking, come to know the occasion of its being made.

## X.

### THE "SAD DITTY" BORN OF THE STORY OF ISABELLA.

AFTER many fruitless efforts to find, by enquiry among Italian scholars in England, the poem alluded to by Boccaccio at the close of the Story of Isabella, I have had the good fortune to come upon it through the kindness of Miss Violet Paget of Florence, who has obtained for me at the same time some interesting details from Professor Comparetti. This high authority believes that the song is no longer sung in Sicily; but it recurs, it seems, as a very

favourite song, in medieval manuscript and printed collections of popular poetry, and even in Tuscany with certain Sicilian expressions. As sung in Tuscany with its Sicilian ancestry thus stamped upon it, it was so popular that one frequently meets, at the head of medieval and renaissance songs, the formula "The air is that of the Basil Pot song." The poem was printed in Florence before the middle of the sixteenth century in a collection of Canzoni, and is quoted in Alessandro d'Ancona's *Storia della Poesia Popolare Italiana*; but the text I have found it easiest to refer to is that given in a modern edition of Boccaccio, namely *Il Decameron di Messer Giovanni Boccacci Riscontrato co' migliori testi e postillato da Pietro Fanfani* (Firenze, Successori Le Monnier, 1880). In the first volume of this handy and very learnedly edited two-volume edition, at pages 348-9, occurs the following note to the closing verses in the Tale of Isabella —

Quale esso fu lo mal cristiano  
Che mi furò la grasca &c.

*Grasca.* È voce siciliana, e vale ciò che sopra è detto *testo*, cioè Vaso da fiori. Leggasi l'annotazione LXVI dei Deputati. Anche l'edizione del 1527 ha *grasca*. Questi due versi poi sono variatissimi ne' varj codici. Qui sarà buono recare tutta intera la Canzone siciliana che allora andava attorno; e la recherò secondo che si legge nel cod. 38, plut. 42, della Laurenziana, scritto in sullo scorcio del secolo XIV. Altri, se la troverà in altri codici, potrà migliorarne la lezione.

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Fanfani's note reads as follows in English: — "*Grasca.* This is a Sicilian word, equivalent to what is above called *testo*, i.e. flower-pot. See note LXVI of the *Deputati* Edition. The Edition of 1527 has also *grasca*; but the two verses cited vary widely in various manuscripts. It may be well to reproduce here, in its entirety, the Sicilian song referred to, which was then current; and I print it as it occurs in Cod. 38, Plut. 42, of the Laurentian [Library], which dates from about the end of the fourteenth century. I leave it to others, who may find it in other manuscripts, to better the text." Other Editions read "grasta;" and this is certainly the better reading, as in the text of the song quoted by Fanfani, the word is written "resta" on each of the four occasions of its occurrence, namely in lines 2, 11, 32 and 49. See also Florio's *World of Words*, voce *grasta*. One of the Italian editors of Boccaccio derives the word from the (old) Provençal *engrestara*; but its true derivation is rather (through the Sicilian) from the Arabic word *ghersck* (a garden that one waters, i.e., therefore, a *small* one). This word, in the objective case (on which Latin adaptations of Arabic words are generally founded) *gherseta*, pronounced *rrerseta* in Africa and Spain, whence came the Saracenic invaders of the ninth century, would be easily corrupted by the Sicilians into *grasta*, *grasta* or *resta*; and it may be noted, in further confirmation of this derivation, that the flower-pot spoken of in the song is no small ordinary one, but a great vase or tub, something like an orange-tree tub, large enough to hold a flowering shrub or tree, that grew so thick as to shade the heroine during her sleep (see line 12), and to afford room for a quantity of marjoram (see line 21) besides, — in fact, to all intents and purposes, a miniature garden or *ghersck*.



Questo fu lo malo cristiano Che mi furò la resta Del basilico mio selemontano. Cresciut' era in gran podesta Ed io lo mi chiantai colla mia mano,	5
Fu lo giorno della festa. Chi guasta l'altrui cose è villania. Chi guasta l'altrui cose è villania E grandissimo il peccato : Ed io, la meschinella, ch' i' m'avvia	10
Una resta seminata, Tant' era bella, all' ombra mi dormia. Dalla gente invidiata Fummi furata, e davanti alla porta.	
Fummi furata, e davanti alla porta :	15
Dolorosa ne' fu' assai : Ed io la meschinella, or fosse io morta ! Che sì cara l'accattai ! E pur l'altrier ch' i' n'ebbi mala scorta	
Dal messer cui tanto amai, Tutto lo 'ntorniai di maggiorana.	20
Tutto lo 'ntorniai di maggiorana : Fu di maggio lo bel mese ; Tre volte lo 'nnaffiai la settimana ; Sì vid' io come ben e' s'apprèse :	25
Or è in paless che mi fu raputo. Or è in palese che mi fu raputo : Non lo posso più celare. Sed s' io davanti l'avessi saputo Che mi dovesse incontrare,	30
Davanti all' uscio mi sare' dormita Per la mia resta guardare : Potrebbebene ajutare l'alto Iddio. Potrebbebene ajutare l'alto Iddio, Se fusse suo piacimento,	35
Dell'uomo che m'è stato tanto rio. Messo m'ha in pene e 'n tormento, Chè m'ha furato il basilico mio Che era pieno di tanto ulimento. Suo ulimento tutta mi sanava.	40
Suo ulimento tutta mi sanava, Tant' avea freschi gli olori ; E la mattino quando lo 'nnaffiava Alla levata del sole	

Tutta la gente si maravigliava : 45  
 Onde vien cotanto aulore?  
 Ed io per lo suo amor morrò di doglia.  
 Ed io per lo suo amor morrò di doglia,  
 Per amor della resta mia :  
 Fosse chi la mi rinsegnar voglia, 50  
 Volentier la raccatteria :  
 Cent' once d' oro ch' i' ho nella fonda  
 Volentier glile doneria ;  
 E doneriegli un bascio in disianza.

My friend Mr. John Payne has been kind enough to add to his admirable version of the Story the following beautiful rendering of the poem. Not to mention the pathetic poem *Salvestra* from Boccaccio published in 1880 (*New Poems*, pages 193 to 275), Mr. Payne's complete success in giving us an English version of the Poems of Francis Villon, and in the still more difficult task of translating the whole body of Arabic verse found in the Book of the Thousand and One Nights, leaves no doubt about his being as fit a poet as possible to complete thus the "compliment to Boccaccio" paid so long ago by Keats and Reynolds.

Alack! ah who could the ill Christian be,  
 That stole my pot away,  
 My pot of basil of Salerno, from me?  
 'Twas thriv'n with many a spray  
 And I with mine own hand did plant the tree, 5  
 Even on the festal day.  
 'Tis felony to waste another's ware.

'Tis felony to waste another's ware ;  
 Yea, and right grievous sin.  
 And I, poor lass, that sowed myself whilere 10  
 A pot with flowers therein,  
 Slept in its shade, so great it was and fair.  
 But folk, that envious bin,  
 Stole it away even from my very door.

'Twas stolen away even from my very door. 15  
 Full heavy was my cheer,  
 (Ah, luckless maid, would I had died tofore!)  
 Who loved <sup>2</sup> it passing dear

<sup>1</sup> *Quere* — natal? — perhaps meaning her birthday.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps *bought*.

- Yet kept one day, through him whom I adore,  
 Ill ward upon my gear. 20  
 I planted it with marjoram about.
- I planted it with marjoram about,  
 When May was blithe and new;  
 Yea, thrice I watered it, week in, week out,  
 And watched how well it grew: 25  
 But now, for sure, away from me 'tis ta'en.
- Ay, now for sure away from me 'tis ta'en;  
 I may 't no longer hide.  
 Had I but known (alas, regret is vain!)  
 That which should me betide, 30  
 Before my door on guard I down had lain  
 To sleep, my flowers beside.  
 Yet might the Great God ease me at His will.
- Yea, God most High might ease me, at His will,  
 If but it liked Him well, 35  
 Of him who wrought me such unright and ill;  
 He into pangs of hell  
 Cast me, who stole my basil-pot, that still  
 Was full of such sweet smell,  
 Its savour did all dole from me away. 40
- All dole its savour did from me away;  
 It was so redolent,  
 When, with the risen sun, at early day  
 To water it I went,  
 The folk would marvel all at it and say, 45  
 "Whence comes this sweetest scent?"  
 And I for love of it shall surely die.
- Yea, I for love of it shall surely die,  
 For love and grief and pain.  
 If one would tell me where it is, I'd buy 50  
 It willingly again.  
 Fivescore gold crowns, that in my purse have I,  
 I'd proffer him full fain,  
 And eke a kiss, if so it like the swain.

XI.

EXTRACT FROM THE RICHES OF CHAUCER.

BY CHARLES COWDEN CLARKE,

*Concerning the composition of the sonnet on "The Floure and the Lefe."*

THE poem of "The Flower and the Leaf" was especially favoured by the young poet, John Keats. The author may perhaps be pardoned for making a short digression upon the present occasion, to record an anecdote in corroboration of the pleasure testified by that vivid intellect upon his first perusal of the composition. It happened at the period when Keats was about publishing his first little volume of poems (in the year 1817); he was then living in the second floor of a house in the Poultry, at the corner of the court leading to the Queen's Arms tavern — that corner nearest to Bow church. The author had called upon him here, and finding his young friend engaged, took possession of a sofa, and commenced reading from his then pocket-companion, Chaucer's "Flower and the Leaf." The fatigue of a long walk, however, prevailed over the fascination of the verses, and he fell asleep. Upon awaking the book was still at his side; but the reader may conceive the author's delight upon finding the following elegant sonnet written in his book at the close of the poem. During my sleep, Keats had read it for the first time; and, knowing that it would gratify me, had subjoined a testimony to its merit, that might have delighted Chaucer himself.

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The further account of the genesis of the sonnet given at page 366 is from pages 52 and 53 of the *Life of Chaucer* prefixed to *The Riches of Chaucer* (2 volumes, 1835).

## XII.

## JOHN HAMILTON REYNOLDS'S

"ROBIN HOOD SONNETS,"

*From "The Garden of Florence" &c., 1821.*

## I.

ROBIN the outlaw! Is there not a mass  
 Of freedom in the name? — It tells the story  
 Of clenched oaks, with branches bow'd and hoary,  
 Leaning in aged beauty o'er the grass; —  
 Of dazed smile on cheek of border lass  
 Listening 'gainst some old gate at his strange glory:  
 And of the dappled stag, struck down and gory,  
 Lying with nostril wide in green morass.

It tells a tale of forest days — of times  
 That would have been most precious unto thee:  
 Days of undying pastoral liberty: —  
 Sweeter than music old of abbey chimes —  
 Sweet as the virtue of Shakspearian rhymes —  
 Days, shadowy with the magic green-wood tree!

## 2.

The trees in Sherwood forest are old and good, —  
 The grass beneath them now is dimly green;  
 Are they deserted all? Is no young mien  
 With loose-slung bugle met within the wood:  
 No arrow found, — foil'd of its antler'd food, —  
 Struck in the oak's rude side? Is there nought seen,  
 To mark the revelries which there have been, —  
 In the sweet days of merry Robin Hood?

Go there, with Summer, and with evening, — go  
 In the soft shadows like some wandering man, —

---

As these sonnets are addressed "To —," and Keats's *Robin Hood* (pages 306-9) was written "in answer" to them, I presume we need not doubt that Keats was the unnamed person for whom the Sonnets were meant. There is a reference, apparently, to the poem and the sonnets in Keats's letter to Reynolds of the 3d of February 1818.

And thou shalt far amid the forest know  
 The archer men in green, with belt and bow,  
 Feasting on pheasant, river-fowl, and swan,  
 With Robin at their head, and Marian.

## 3.

With coat of Lincoln green and mantle too,  
 And horn of ivory mouth, and buckle bright,  
 And arrows wing'd with peacock-feathers light,  
 And trusty bow well gather'd of the yew, —  
 Stands Robin Hood: — and near, with eyes of blue  
 Shining through dusk hair, like the stars of night,  
 And habited in pretty forest plight, —  
 His green-wood beauty sits, young as the dew.

Oh gentle-tressed girl! Maid Marian!  
 Are thine eyes bent upon the gallant game  
 That stray in the merry Sherwood: thy sweet fame  
 Can never, never die. And thou, high man,  
 Would we might pledge thee with thy silver Can  
 Of Rhenish, in the woods of Nottingham!

## XIII.

## LETTER FROM B. R. HAYDON CONCERNING THE SONNETS ON THE ELGIN MARBLES.

MARCH, 1817.

MY DEAR KEATS, Many thanks, my dear fellow, for your two noble sonnets. I know not a finer image than the comparison of a poet unable to express his high feelings to a sick eagle looking at the sky, where he must have remembered his former towerings amid the blaze of dazzling sunbeams, in the pure expanse of glittering clouds; now and then passing angels, on heavenly errands, lying at the will of the wind with moveless wings, or pitching downward with a fiery rush, eager and intent on objects of their seeking . . .

I feel deeply the high and enthusiastic praise with which you have

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This letter concerning the sonnets printed at pages 367-8 is from that extremely interesting book *Benjamin Robert Haydon: Correspondence and Table-Talk* (1876). It occurs in Volume II, at page 2.

spoken of me in the first sonnet. Be assured you shall never repent it. The time shall come, if God spare my life, when you will remember it with delight.

God bless you!

B. R. HAYDON.

#### XIV.

#### THREE SONNETS FROM LEIGH HUNT'S FOLIAGE.

To — — —, M.D.

##### ON HIS GIVING ME A LOCK OF MILTON'S HAIR.

**I** FELT my spirit leap, and look at thee  
 Through my changed colour with glad grateful stare,  
 When after shewing us this glorious hair,  
 Thou didst turn short, and bending pleasantly  
 With gracious hand gav'st the great lock to me.  
 An honouring gift indeed! which I will wear  
 About me, while I breathe this strenuous air,  
 That nursed his Apollonian tresses free.  
 I'll wear it, not as my inherited due,  
 (For there is one, whom had he kept his art  
 For Freedom still, nor left her for the crew  
 Of lucky slaves in his misgiving heart,  
 I would have begged thy leave to give it to)  
 Yet not without some claims, though far apart.

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No apology is necessary for giving these sonnets by way of appendix to Keats's poem on the same lock of hair, printed at pages 383-4, but I regret the absence of details concerning the history of the lock of hair. Up to the time of sending these sheets to press, I have not succeeded in recovering Hunt's account of what may be called the pedigree of the lock, or in ascertaining the present whereabouts of the hair. Mr. Thornton Hunt had it; but the family has lost sight of it. A reference to "Milton's hair" in a letter from Mr. Robert Browning to Leigh Hunt, published in the *Correspondence*, Volume II, page 267, led me to apply to the living poet for information. Mr. Browning tells me that he still possesses "a very small portion" of the lock, given to himself and Mrs. Browning by Hunt at Hammersmith on the 13th of July 1856. "He detached it with trembling fingers, and wrote on the envelope 'A bit of a lock of the hair of Milton. To Robert and E. B. Browning from Leigh Hunt. God bless them.'" He subsequently wrote to Mr. Browning a long and interesting letter, containing a pedigree of the lock, "precise and plausible": this pedigree, though not immediately forthcoming, Mr. Browning is certain of recovering eventually, as it is safely preserved.

TO THE SAME, ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

**I**T lies before me there, and my own breath  
Stirs it's thin outer threads, as though beside  
The living head I stood in honoured pride,  
Talking of lovely things that conquer death.  
Perhaps he pressed it once, or underneath  
Ran his fine fingers, when he leant, blank-eyed,  
And saw, in fancy, Adam and his bride  
With their heaped locks, or his own Delphic wreath.  
There seems a love in hair, though it be dead.  
It is the gentlest, yet the strongest thread  
Of our frail plant,— a blossom from the tree  
Surviving the proud trunk ; — as if it said,  
Patience and Gentleness is Power. In me  
Behold affectionate eternity.

TO THE SAME, ON THE SAME OCCASION.

**A** LIBERAL taste, and a wise gentleness  
Have ever been the true physician's dower,  
As still is visible in the placid power  
Of those old Grecian busts ; and helps to bless  
The balmy name of Haller, and the address  
Of cordial Garth ; and him in Cowley's bower,  
Harvey ; and Milton's own exotic flower,  
Young Deodati, plucked from his caress.  
To add to these an ear for the sweet hold  
Of music, and an eye, ay and a hand  
For forms which the smooth Graces tend and follow,  
Shews thee indeed true offspring of the bland  
And vital god, whom she of happy mould,  
The Larissæan beauty, bore Apollo.



## XV.

THE "NILE" SONNETS OF LEIGH HUNT AND PERCY  
BYSSHE SHELLEY.

## THE NILE.

IT flows through old hush'd Ægypt and its sands,  
 Like some grave mighty thought threading a dream;  
 And times and things, as in that vision, seem  
 Keeping along it their eternal stands, —  
 Caves, pillars, pyramids, the shepherd bands  
 That roam'd through the young world, the glory extreme  
 Of high Sesostris, and that southern beam,  
 The laughing queen that caught the world's great hands.  
 Then comes a mightier silence, stern and strong,  
 As of a world left empty of its throng,  
 And the void weighs on us; and then we wake,  
 And hear the fruitful stream lapsing long  
 'Twi'x villages, and think how we shall take  
 Our own calm journey on for human sake.

HUNT.

MONTH after month the gather'd rains descend,  
 Drenching yon secret Æthiopian dells,  
 And from the Desert's ice-girt pinnacles,  
 Where Frost and Heat in strange embraces blend  
 On Atlas, fields of moist snow half depend.  
 Girt there with blasts and meteors, Tempest dwells  
 By Nile's aërial urn, with rapid spells  
 Urging its waters to their mighty end.  
 O'er Egypt's land of memory floods are level,  
 And they are thine, O Nile! and well thou knowest  
 That soul-sustaining airs and blasts of evil,  
 And fruits and poisons spring where'er thou flowest.  
 Beware, O man! for knowledge must to thee,  
 Like the great flood to Egypt, ever be.

SHELLEY.

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Hunt's sonnet is from *Foliage*, — Shelley's from the Library Edition of his works.

## XVI.

## SONNET FROM THE GARDEN OF FLORENCE &amp;c.,\*

BY JOHN HAMILTON REYNOLDS,

*The subject of Keats's sonnet, "Blue! 'Tis the life of heaven," &c.*

SWEET poets of the gentle antique line,  
 That made the hue of beauty all eterne;  
 And gave earth's melodies a silver turn,—  
 Where did you steal your art so right divine?—  
 Sweetly ye memoried every golden twine  
 Of your ladies' tresses: — teach me how to spurn  
 Death's lone decaying and oblivion stern  
 From the sweet forehead of a lady mine.

The golden clusters of enamouring hair  
 Glow'd in poetic pictures sweetly well; —  
 Why should not tresses dusk, that are so fair  
 On the live brow, have an eternal spell  
 In poesy? — dark eyes are dearer far  
 Than orbs that mock the hyacinthine-bell.

## XVII.

## SONNET BY PIERRE RONSARD.†

NATURE, ornant Cassandre, qui devoit  
 De sa douceur forcer les plus rebelles,  
 La composa de cent beautez nouvelles,  
 Que dès mille ans en espagne elle auoit: —  
 De tous les biens qu' Amour au Ciel couvoit  
 Comme un trésor chèrement sous ses ailes,  
 Elle enrichit les graces immortelles

\* See page 387.

† This sonnet, Keats's translation from which is given at pages 422–23, is the second in *Les Amours de Cassandre*. Cassandre, it should be explained, was, as Lord Houghton records in the *Life, Letters &c.*, "a damosel of Blois," beloved of Master Peter Ronsard.

De son bel oeil qui les Dieux esmouuoit. —  
 Du Ciel à peine elle estoit descenduë  
 Quand ie la vey, quand mon asme perduë  
 En deuint folle, et d'un si poignant trait,  
 Amour coula ses beautez en mes veines,  
 Qu' autres plaisirs ie ne sens que mes peines  
 Ny autre bien qu' adorer son portrait.

## XVIII.

## ON LA BELLE DAME SANS MERCY;

REMARKS BY LEIGH HUNT,

*Published in "The Indicator" for the 10th of May 1820.*

**A**MONG the pieces printed at the end of Chaucer's works, and attributed to him, is a translation, under this title, of a poem of the celebrated Alain Chartier, Secretary to Charles the Sixth and Seventh. It was the title which suggested to a friend the verses at the end of our present number. We wish Alain could have seen them. He would have found a Troubadour air for them, and sung them to La Belle Dame Agnes Sorel, who was however not Sans Mercy. The union of the imaginative and the real is very striking throughout, particularly in the dream. The wild gentleness of the rest of the thoughts and of the music are alike old: and they are also alike young: for love and imagination are always young, let them bring with them what times and accompaniments they may. If we take real flesh and blood with us, we may throw ourselves, on the facile wings of our sympathy, into what age we please. It is only by trying to feel, as well as to fancy, through the medium of a costume, that writers become mere fleshless masks and cloaks, — things like the trophies of the ancients, when they hung up the empty armour of an enemy. A hopeless lover would still feel these verses, in spite of the introduction of something unearthly. Indeed any lover, truly touched, or any body capable of being so, will feel them; because love itself resembles a visitation; and the kindest looks, which bring with them an inevitable portion of happiness because they seem happy themselves, haunt us with a spell-like power, which makes us shudder to guess at the sufferings of those who can be fascinated by unkind ones.

People however need not be much alarmed at the thought of such

sufferings now-a-days; not at least in some countries. Since the time when ladies, and cavaliers, and poets, and the lovers of nature, felt that humanity was a high and not a mean thing, love in general has become either a grossness or a formality. The modern systems of morals would ostensibly divide women into two classes, those who have no charity, and those who have no restraint; while men, poorly conversant with the latter, and rendered indifferent to the former, acquire bad ideas of both. Instead of the worship of Love, we have the worship of Mammon; and all the difference we can see between the sufferings attending on either is, that the sufferings from the worship of Love exalt and humanize us, and those from the worship of Mammon debase and brutalize. Between the delights there is no comparison. — Still our uncasiness keeps our knowledge going on.

A word or two more of Alain Chartier's poem. "M. Aleyн," saith the argument, "secretary to the king of France, framed this dialogue between a gentleman and a gentlewoman, who finding no mercy at her hand, dieth for sorrow." We know not in what year Chartier was born; but he must have lived to a good age, and written this poem in his youth, if Chaucer translated it; for he died in 1449, and Chaucer, an old man, in 1400. The beginning however, as well as the goodness of the version, looks as if our countryman had done it; for he speaks of the translation's having been enjoined him by way of penance; and the Legend of Good Women was the result of a similar injunction, in consequence of his having written some stories not so much to the credit of the sex! He, — who as he represents, had written infinite things in their praise! But the Court-ladies, it seems, did not relish the story of Troilus and Cressida. The exordium, which the translator has added, is quite in our poet's manner. He says, that he rose one day, not well awaked; and thinking how he should best enter upon his task, he took one of his morning walks,

Till I came to a lusty green valley  
Full of flowers, to see a great pleasure;  
And so, boldly, (with their benign sufferance  
Which read this book, touching this matter)  
Thus I began, if it please you to hear.

Master Aleyн's dialogue, which is very long, will not have much interest except for those who are in the situation of his lover and belle Dame; but his introduction of it, his account of his riding abroad, thinking of his lost mistress, — his hearing music in a garden and being pressed by some friends who saw him to come in, — is all extremely lively and natural. At his entrance, the ladies, "every one by one," bade him welcome "a great deal more than he was worthy."

They are waited upon, at their repast, not by "deadly servants," but by gentlemen and lovers; of one of whom he proceeds to give a capital picture.

Emong all other, one I gan espy,  
 Which in great thought ful often came and went  
 As one that had been ravished utterly :  
 In his language not greatly diligent,  
 His countenance he kept with great turment,  
 But his desire farre passed his reason,  
 For ever his eye went after his entent,  
 Full many a time, when it was no season.  
 To make chere, sore himselfe he pained,  
 And outwardly he feigned great gladnesse ;  
 To sing also, by force he was constrained,  
 For no pleasaunce, but very shamefastnesse ;  
 For the complaint of his most heavinesse  
 Came to his voice.<sup>1</sup>

### XIX.

NOTE ON THE SPELLING, INFLEXIONS, &c. FOUND  
 IN KEATS'S WRITINGS, AND ADOPTED IN THIS  
 EDITION.

**I**N the minor matters of orthography, punctuation, &c., I have thought it proper to let the author have the principal voice, rather than to apply any external standard. To ascertain Keats's deliberate preferences as far as possible, and carry them out consistently, seems to me the best procedure. In applying such a principle to those works which were printed in his life-time, it is necessary to record all deviations from the text even when they are in pursuance of the poet's own rules; but in reprinting the posthumous works it is allowable to move a little more freely, because the text of those works is certain to have been revised in minor detail from a different point of view. I have therefore endeavoured to accommodate the orthography &c. of the posthumous poems to that of the others without recording the particular forms adopted in previous editions.

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<sup>1</sup> After this extract Hunt gives Keats's poem, with the remark "But to return to our other Belle Dame."

In many instances Keats adopted, no doubt deliberately, the orthography of Spenser, — as in *lilly*, *ballance*, *puvillion*, and I have not thought it advisable to interfere with a preference of this kind. Even for *but* instead of *butt* he had the authority of elder writers; and I presume no one will dispute the orthography *chace*, seeing that Somerville, to whom the word belongs of right, spelt it so.

These are but samples of a great many words which Keats used with a different spelling from that commonly employed; but there is no occasion to discuss the vocabulary further.

The most difficult matter to deal with from the point of view of the poet's intention has been that of words inflected in the past participle. There is evidence both internal and external that Keats attached importance to the way in which his past participles in *ed* or *'d* were printed. The external evidence takes the form of an instruction for the printer, written upon the manuscript of *Endymion* in his own handwriting:

“Attend to the punctuation in general as marked, and to the Elisions in the last syllables of the participles as they are written.”

This makes it abundantly clear that he had a serious intention in regard to the participles; and there is ample internal evidence that that intention, expressed broadly, was to print *ed* when that syllable was to be pronounced and to replace the *e* by an apostrophe in the opposite case. This sounds at first quite simple; and Keats himself had clearly no notion how difficult a task he had set himself, and how very partially the ardent mood of poetic composition admits of carrying out any such rule in detail. The three books which he got printed all betray the intention to follow this rule; and each is inconsistent in itself as to the carrying out of the rule; while the manuscripts of Keats which I have examined in connexion with this edition are naturally still more wayward. The difficulty of now carrying the poet's own rule out for him arises from several circumstances. In regard to the great majority of words ending with *ed* in his works there is no doubt whatever, upon metrical grounds, that the syllable is to be pronounced. But in many instances the *e* in the final *ed* is left standing, both in manuscript and in print, when metrical considerations make it absolutely certain that it was meant to be replaced by an apostrophe; while in a not inconsiderable number of cases, where the question is rather rhythmical than metrical, it is by no means certain whether the *e* was left in by accident or on purpose. Cases in which an apostrophe replaces an *e* that is peremptorily wanted for rhyme or metre or rhythm are comparatively uncommon; but they exist; and in one or two passages the author's manuscript shows a curious exception, — an *é* (accented in a manner beyond all dispute) when the verse is such that the real need was an apostrophe instead of an *e*. If these were all

the points one had to consider the matter would still be a simple one enough to settle: one would say without hesitation, "leave the *e* in when it is quite clear it is to be sounded; replace it by an apostrophe when it is quite clear it is mute; and when there is a doubt give it the benefit of the doubt and leave it in." For it is obviously of little consequence whether we read (*Endymion*, Book I, line 10)

Of all the unhealthy and o'erdarkenèd ways

or

Of all the unhealthy and o'erdarken'd ways:

the rhythm is easy and noble in either case: if we sound the *e*, the richness of the redundant second foot has an echo of redundancy in the fifth foot: if we leave the *e* out, it has not; and in the manuscript and first edition of *Endymion* the *e* stands, — according to the rule, to be pronounced. Similarly, it is of no great moment whether we read (*Sonnet to \* \* \* \* \**)

Be echoèd swiftly through that ivory shell

or

Be echo'd swiftly through that ivory shell.

On the other hand it is of some consequence whether we read (*Endymion*, Book I, line 111)

Who gathering round the altar seemèd to pry

or

Who gathering round the altar seem'd to pry:

the *e* has clearly no business there; but there it is both in the manuscript and in the first edition, — to be pronounced, according to the rule, and therefore to be expelled for an apostrophe by an editor desirous of carrying the poet's rule into effect for him. Just as important is it that we should read in the Sonnet *On First looking into Chapman's Homer*

That deep-brow'd Homer rul'd as his demesne;

and not

That deep-brow'd Homer rulèd as his demesne;

but *ruled* Keats wrote and printed, though in the same sonnet he wrote and printed *star'd* and not *stared*. And unfortunately the words ending in *ed* are not all or nearly all of a class thus easy to deal with: there is a host of words which are inflected, not by the addition of *ed*, but by the addition of *d* to an *e* which they have already, as *place*, *face*, *love*, *move*, *range*, *change*, *pile*, *wile*, *charge*,

*force, rouse, twine, use, scare, dance, pulse, picture*; and many of these, especially those in which the *e* has an influence upon the value of the consonant it follows, have a disguised, I had almost said an emasculated look, when the *e* is replaced by an apostrophe: you take something away from them that was theirs; and this is not the same thing as withholding something that you might or might not give them in inflecting them. Then again there are the words which change a letter when inflected with *ed*, such as *bury, marry, tarry, dry, descry, reply*; and these are the hardest of all to deal with. *Dried* according to Keats's rule is a dissyllable; the elision of the *e* makes an ugly word enough, *dri'd*; and I have not met with it in Keats's poetry; but I do find in his manuscript *dry'd*, and I also find *descry'd*; and this, I take it, would have been his way of settling the number of syllables to be given to each of the words of that class. *Honied*, he writes for a dissyllable; but he would doubtless have put *honey'd*, had he thought about the spelling of the uninflected word. As regards the words which change their feature and complexion when written with an apostrophe instead of an *e*, I can only say thus much, — Keats wrote and printed, often over and over again, *puls'd, danc'd, rang'd, increas'd, discours'd, shar'd, unconfn'd, rais'd, arous'd, disguis'd, smil'd, surcharg'd, heav'd, lov'd, pin'd, clos'd, seiz'd, convuls'd*, and even  *pictur'd*; but that he treated these words thus with some compunction, even were it an unconscious or slumbering undercurrent of compunction, may perhaps be fairly deduced from the fact that he very often left them with the *e*, in cases in which it was of precisely the same importance to excise that vowel as it was in the cases in which he did excise it.

“Therefore 'tis” not “with full happiness that I” have set hand to the task of carrying out in detail the rule which Keats evidently meant to follow. It is a stern duty, from which one must not shrink, to disfigure several more words in order to conform to the practice of an author who has found such disfigurement generally necessary. With a living author one would argue in the hope of persuading him to leave every *e* in and put an accent or two dots on every one that is to be sounded, if the reader cannot be trusted to sound them for himself. But for one who is among the immortals we must work as far as may be after his proper fashion. It is necessary to make the text consistent with its own rules, — to consider the ease of the reader in the manner in which the poet intended to consider it, and no other. So much by way of apology to the many lovely words printed in this edition otherwise than one would wish to see them printed. The following lists of altered words have been made with the view of relieving the foot-notes.

H. B. F.





LISTS OF WORDS ALTERED.

653

In the 1820 Volume — continued.

			Line			Line
lily	EVE OF ST.			lilies	FANCY	45
	AGNES	St. VI	7	gray	HYPERION	Bk. III 114
fairies	"	XIX	6			
ay	"	XLII	1			

WORDS ENDING IN *ed*.

In the 1817 Volume

	Page in this edition	Line of poem		Page in this edition	Line of poem
passed	3	1	honied	22	24
leaved	5	5	broidered	23	45
played	6	25	placed	23	49
overtwined	6	35	reclined	25	18
scattered	6	45	tried	26	32
inspired	10	163	loved	26	14
delayed	11	212	fine-eyed	29	35
turned	11	213	intertwined	29	43
soothed	11	224	black-eyed	30	87
eyed	11	225	tired	33	84
turned	12	9	Lured	33	101
prepared	15	29	required	37	105
bright-eyed	16	73	strayed	41	9
large-eyed	18	127	ruled	46	6
turned	18	129	smoothed	53	57
arched	18	130	chequered	54	77
Embroidered	20	14	Bared	56	190
listened	21	30	blasphemed	57	202
glistened	21	32	dared	59	300

In ENDYMION

	Book	Line		Book	Line
finished	I	55	paled	I	189
strayed	"	69	Eyed	"	194
unsullied	"	97	fire-tailed	"	367
seemed	"	111	used	"	433
died	"	116	Dried	"	439
used	"	134	used	"	546
trailed	"	145	dazed	"	601
piled	"	183	used	"	728

## In ENDYMION — continued

	Book	Line		Book	Line
died	I	733	died	III	139
moved	"	897	dried	"	144
preserved	"	904	dived	"	351
magnified	II	19	tried	"	390
dared	"	36	ceased	"	423
reached	"	84	phantasied	"	506
clear-eyed	"	109	emptied	" 510 &	515
Descried	"	245	poisoned	"	602
exclaimed	"	295	Moved	"	606
Medicined	"	484	reached	"	671
used	"	553	applied	"	781
zoned	"	569	eyed	"	803
exhaled	"	663	Moved	"	822
endued	"	707	cried	"	832
ashamed	"	787	uninspired	IV	25
self-doomed	"	843	replied	"	125
pursued	"	928	imbrued	"	212
honied	"	997	gazed	"	293
blear-eyed	III	11	full-veined	"	400
bared	"	35	yawned	"	464
Couched	"	58	tamed	"	591
unaccustomed	"	90	duped	"	629
Lashed	"	111	entered	"	951
chaced	"	138	dark-eyed	"	977

## In the 1820 Volume

## LAMIA

## LAMIA — continued

	Part	Line		Part	Line
Striped	I	49	unsullied	I	383
Eyed	"	50	mused	II	38
penanced	"	55	subdued	"	82
robed	"	76	canopied	"	132
Cried	"	168	paced	"	134
Flared	"	358	insphered	"	183
corniced	"	360	placed	"	196
robed	"	365	cried	" 261-271	
replied	"	374	soft-toned	"	261
arrived	"	378	fair-spaced	"	273

## In the 1820 Volume — continued

ISABELLA			PSYCHE		
	St.	Line		St.	Line
rich-ored	XIV	8	inspired	—	43
Paled	XVII	4			
pined	LXIII	1			
EVE OF ST. AGNES			FANCY		
eager-eyed	IV	7	Dulcet-eyed	—	81
unespied	XIX	4	“Bards of Passion”		
sleepy-eyed	“	7	Double-lived		4
gazed	XXVIII	2	“		40
ceased	XXXIII	7			
died 8	XXXVIII	3	HYPERION		
saved	“	6	unpractised	Book I	Line 62
			lank-eared	“	230
			keen-eyed	“	278
			cried	II	293
			“	“	295
			lilies	III	35
NIGHTINGALE					
leaden-eyed	3	8			

## XXI.

LIST OF PERSONS COMPOSING THE KEATS CIRCLE,  
WITH DATES OF BIRTH AND DEATH.<sup>1</sup>

JOHN KEATS, born 31 October 1795, died 23 February 1821.

Thomas Keats, father of the poet, died 16 April 1804.

Frances Keats, born Jennings, mother of the poet, died, Mrs. Rawlings, February 1810.

George Keats, brother of the poet, born 28 February 1797, died 1842.

Thomas Keats, brother of the poet, born 18 November 1799, died 1 December 1818.

Edward Keats, brother of the poet, born 28 April 1801, died in infancy.

Fanny Keats, sister of the poet, born 3 June 1803.

<sup>1</sup>The Family Bible in which were recorded the births and deaths of the Keats family was, among other books belonging to Keats's sister, seized by the Custom House officers in Spain many years ago, and never restored. The dates of Keats's birth and of his sister's, I found recorded in the register of baptisms at the church of St. Botolph, Bishopsgate. Professor Colvin recovered the dates of birth of the three brothers "from the parish registers of St. Leonard's, Shoreditch." The rest of the dates given in this list are from various sources of authority, published and private, including Mr. Colvin's *Keats*.

- John Jennings, maternal grandfather of the poet, died 8 March 1805.  
 Alice Jennings, maternal grandmother of the poet, died December 1814 (aged 78).  
 Midgley John Jennings, Captain R.N., maternal uncle of the poet, died 8 October 1808.  
 Frances (or Fanny) Brawne, born 9 August 1800, died, Mrs. Lindon, 1865.  
 Charles Cowden Clarke, born 15 December 1787, died 13 March 1877.  
 James Henry Leigh Hunt, born 19 October 1784, died 28 August 1859.  
 Benjamin Robert Haydon, born 26 January 1786, died 22 June 1846.  
 John Hamilton Reynolds, born 9 September 1796, died 15 November 1852.  
 Charlotte Reynolds, mother of the last-named, born 15 November 1761, died 13 May 1848.  
 Jane Reynolds, daughter of the last-named, born 6 November 1794, d'ied, Mrs. Hood, 4 December 1846.  
 Mariane Reynolds, sister of the last-named, born 23 February 1793, died, Mrs. Green, 7 January 1874.  
 Charlotte Reynolds, sister of the last-named, born 12 May 1802, died 26 October 1884.  
 Charles Wells, born 1802, died 17 February 1879.  
 Charles Wentworth Dilke of Chichester, born 25 November 1742, died 25 March 1826.  
 Charles Wentworth Dilke, Keats's friend, son of the last-named, born 8 December 1789, died 10 August 1864.  
 Charles Wentworth Dilke, afterwards first Baronet of the name, son of Keats's friend, born 18 February 1810, died 11 May 1869.  
 William Dilke, younger brother of Keats's friend, born 16 August 1796, died 29 August 1885.  
 John Snook, born 7 October 1780, died 29 January 1863.  
 Lætitia Snook, wife of John Snook, born Dilke 4 April 1784, died 9 March 1865.  
 John Taylor, born 31 July 1781, died 5 July 1864.  
 James Augustus Hessey, born 28 July 1785, died 7 April 1870.  
 Benjamin Bailey, born about 1794, died 1852.  
 Richard Woodhouse, born 1788 or 1789, died 3 September 1834.  
 Joseph Ritchie, born about 1788, died 20 December 1819.  
 James Rice, not living in December 1833  
 Joseph Severn, born 1793, died 3 August 1879.  
 Charles Armitage Brown, born 1786, died June 1842.  
 William Wordsworth, born 7 April 1770, died 23 April 1850.  
 Percy Bysshe Shelley, born 4 August 1792, died 8 July 1822.

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This list has been revised and completed as far as possible so as to make it correct at the present time (1889); and I should have been glad to add particulars of birth and death in regard to George Felton Mathew, Thomas Richards, and some others, concerning whom, up till now, I have not learnt the required details.

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Give me women, wine, and snuff . . . . .	587

... on earth are sojourning; .  
Grievously are we tantaliz'd, one and all — .

Had I a man's fair form, then might my sigh:  
Hadst thou liv'd in days of old, . . .  
Happy, happy glowing fire! . . .  
Happy is England! I could be content . . .  
Hast thou from the caves of Golconda, a gem  
Haydon! forgive me that I cannot speak . . .  
He is to weet a melancholy carle: . . .  
Hearken, thou craggy ocean pyramid! . . .  
Hence Burgundy, Claret, and Port, . . .  
Here all the summer could I stay, . . .  
Highmindedness, a jealousy for good, . . .  
How fever'd is the man, who cannot look . . .  
How many bards gild the lapses of time! . . .  
Hush, hush! tread softly! hush, hush my dea

I cry your mercy — pity — love! — aye, love!  
I had a dove and the sweet dove died; . . .  
I stood tip-toe upon a little hill, . . .  
If by dull rhymes our English must be chain'd,  
If shame can on a soldier's vein-swoll'n front  
In a drear-nighted December, . . .  
In after-time, a sage of mickle lore . . .  
In midmost Ind, beside Hydaspes cool, . . .  
In the wide sea there lives a forlorn wretch, . . .  
In thy western halls of gold . . .  
It keeps eternal whisperings around . . .

Just at the self-same beat of Time's wide wings

Keen, fitful gusts are whisp'ring here and there  
King of the stormy sea! . . .

I life's sea hath



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